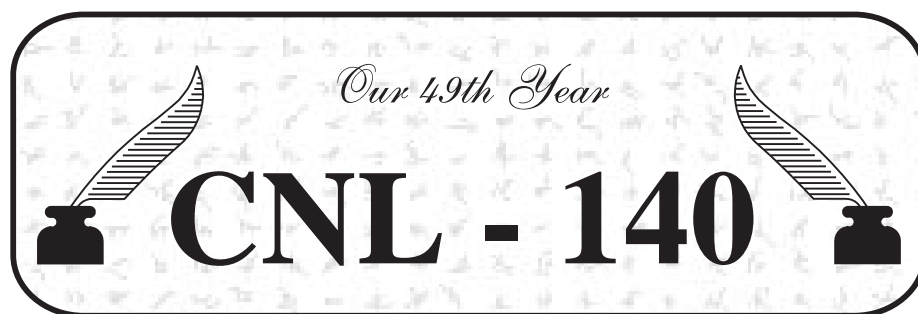


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Submitting Material for Publication

We encourage our readers to consider submitting material on early North American numismatics to CNL for publication. In general, this includes coins, tokens, paper money, and medals that were current before the U. S. Federal Mint began operations in 1793. However, there are certain pieces produced after the 1793 date that have traditionally been considered part of pre-Federal numismatics and should be included. We cover all aspects of study regarding the manufacture and use of these items. Our very knowledgeable and friendly staff will assist potential authors to finalize submissions by providing advice concerning the text and help with illustrations. Submissions, in either electronic or hardcopy format, should be sent to the editor via the e-mail address given in the editorial or through the ANS at the above postal address.



Welcome to our summer issue. Even in the midst of a severe economic downturn, interest in early American numismatics remains strong. I believe it is because this area of numismatics is dominated by people who appreciate the coins for their aesthetic appeal and also for the circumstances surrounding their manufacture. Economics are secondary. In line with the interest concerning all aspects of a coinage, this issue contains two in-depth studies: the first examines the mysteries of one individual coin, while the other explores the provenance of an entire series.

We start this issue with a paper that discusses the 1784-dated imitation British halfpenny known today as Batty 3826 or Vlack 14-84A. This coin is considered by many to be of American origin primarily because of its crude design. Byron Weston carefully reconsiders the many aspects of this coin and argues that it is no different from many other British-made counterfeit halfpennies. Byron reviews what has been previously written about this coin, he provides many illustrations to support his discussion, and he introduces a new counterfeit halfpenny variety that appears to have been made by the same counterfeiting gang that produced Vlack 14-84A.

Byron references a little-known 1959 article by Eric Newman which has been reprinted in this issue for the enlightenment of our readers. The reprint follows Byron's paper and was first published in *Empire Topics* by Q. David Bowers.

Next, we are pleased to welcome a new author, Max Spiegel, to the pages of *CNL*. Max writes about his investigations into the origin of Bermuda's hogge money. First, however, I would like to introduce Max. He recently completed his junior year at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, where he is studying history and art history. During the summer, Max works as a cataloger for Heritage Auction Galleries in Dallas, Texas. A native of Brooklyn, New York, Max collects colonial coins and Betts medals, and is also interested in early Federal coinage.

In his paper, Max explores the possibility that Charles Anthony, the chief engraver at the Royal Mint in London from 1599 until his death in 1615, may have engraved the dies and privately minted hogge money for the Somers Isles Company. I won't spill the beans concerning what Max has determined. You will need to read Max's interesting and well-written paper to discover his conclusions.

Our final submission, in the form of a Technical Note, comes from Clem Schettino concerning a non-state coinage What'sIt?. Up to now, all known What'sIt?s have been re-engraved state coppers.

John Kleeberg, one of our associate editors and frequent contributor to *CNL*, has a new book recently published by the ANS. The title is *The Numismatic Finds of the Americas: An Inventory of American Coin Hoards (Treasure Trove), Shipwrecks, Single Finds, and Find in Excavations*, ISBN 978-0-89722-311-9. It can be ordered on the ANS website at <<http://www.numismatics.org/store/publications>>. I have not yet seen the book but based on John's past writings on early American numismatics, I'm sure that everyone should consider it for their library.

Finally, I would like to remind our readers that a comprehensive index for all issues of *CNL* is available in PDF format. The index can be downloaded from the *CNL* web page at <<http://www.numismatics.org/CNL/CNL>> and

searched using your software's FIND command. With nearly 50 years of continuous publication, *CNL* is a wealth of information on early American numismatics. Importantly, all back issues are available in PDF format.

Gary Trudgen
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Batty 3826: Vlack 14-84A Reconsidered

by

Byron K. Weston; Milesburg, PA**Introduction**

The coins we collect are mute, silent witnesses to the time in which they were made and circulated. What we currently believe about them and their travels, including who made them, and what we actually know may sometimes be miles or even an ocean apart. When Robert A. Vlack revised his plates of Tory halfpence¹ to include additional dates, one of those added was designated 14-84A. It is a very crudely styled halfpenny with hand-engraved central devices and 1784 date, but with letter punches used for the legends. Although Vlack did not offer an explanation as to why it was included on his revised plates of counterfeit halfpence believed to have been made in America, its inclusion destined it to be considered of American manufacture and origin by future collectors.

Eric P. Newman² and subsequent researchers and writers have published theories based on their own beliefs about counterfeit halfpence. The beliefs of prior researchers are integral to their line of reasoning and justification for considering Vlack 14-84A to be an American-made counterfeit English halfpenny. We cannot reconsider Vlack 14-84A without also re-examining those earlier beliefs in order to fully appreciate and understand the differences between current knowledge and how that affects the original conclusions drawn from them.

Although Newman's theories concerning the provenance of Vlack 14-84A have been discussed before by this author,³ this variety cannot be examined without touching upon that discussion once again. We will also take a brief look back at the history of numismatic research centered on counterfeit halfpence and also discuss the subsequent theories put forth by John M. Kleeberg in his paper on the Beach-Grünthal Hoard.⁴ Presented here will be a point-by-point comparison of these theories with what is now known about contemporaneous counterfeit halfpence. Plus, compelling new evidence will be presented that strongly suggests that circumstances surrounding the manufacture and circulation of Vlack 14-84A is no different from that of the many counterfeit halfpence exported from Britain to America.

Crosby, Betts, Batty, and Hammond

In America, Sylvester S. Crosby was first to notice that certain counterfeit halfpence could be linked by obverse/reverse die sharing with certain state coinages of Vermont and Connecticut.⁵ While Crosby recognized these counterfeit halfpence as part of the American colonial coinage, his interest was with how they related to the early state coinages. His focus was on the state

1 Vlack, Robert A., Photographic Plates, "American 'Tory' Halfpence," 1964; "Early English Counterfeit Halfpence Struck in America," 1974.

2 Newman, Eric P., "American Circulation of English and Bungtown Halfpence," *Studies on Money in Early America*, The American Numismatic Society, 1976; "Were Counterfeit Halfpence Dated 1785 Made Specifically For American Use?," *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 33, 1988.

3 Weston, Byron K., "Evasion Hybrids: The Missing Link," *The Colonial Newsletter*, Serial No. 111, Volume 39, No. 2, August 1999, pp. 1941-87.

4 Kleeberg, John M., "Reconstructing The Beach-Grünthal Hoard of Counterfeit Halfpence; The Montclair, New Jersey (1922) Hoard," *American Journal of Numismatics* 7-8, The American Numismatic Society, 1995-1996.

5 Crosby, Sylvester S., *The Early Coins of America*, pp. 190-92, footnote p. 291, (Boston, 1875, repr. 1970).

coinage varieties that he believed to be contemporaneous counterfeits, and not necessarily the counterfeit halfpence that were linked with them.

A little more than a decade later C. Wyllys Betts would expound upon the links between counterfeit halfpence and the state coinages.⁶ Betts put more focus on the counterfeit halfpence and included in his observations design style similarities and letter punch comparisons between the counterfeits and the state coinages of Vermont and Connecticut. In effect, Betts established the criteria that needed to be met in order to include certain counterfeit halfpence as part of a collection of the American colonial and state coinage issues.

About the same time, and across the Atlantic, D. T. Batty was cataloguing, among other things, genuine and contemporary eighteenth-century counterfeit halfpence, including 585 George III varieties.⁷ Most important to this study was Batty's 3826. Although there were no line drawings or plates illustrating this particular variety, there is little doubt that this is the same variety that Vlack included on his revised plates as 14-84A (see figure 1).



Figure 1: Batty 3826/Vlack 14-84A.

Batty's Description

Obverse - Thin laureate bust to right; Legend "Georgivs.III.Rex"; no dot after legend.

Reverse - Female seated, &c.; "Britannia" Ex. - "1784."

Very rude work on thin blank. The obverse and reverse crossed to the right.

Metrology (this specimen)

Weight: 110 grains; X-axis diameter: 28 mm; Die axis rotation: 70°.

Die axis rotation measured from the obverse top to the top of the reverse in a clockwise direction while viewing the obverse. [Shown 2X actual size.] *Photo provided by the author.*

Batty had also listed a 1787-dated counterfeit halfpenny that would fit into Vlack's series as well as a 1747-dated counterfeit that fit the description of Vlack's 1-47A. Another example of 1-47A had also been found by Betts in the Yale College collection. While it is possible that Batty's 3826 may have been exported from America to Britain, as these two Atlee/Machin's Mills halfpence had been, it is interesting that Batty 3826 went undiscovered by Crosby and Betts, and did not

⁶ Betts, C. Wyllys, "Counterfeit Half Pence Current in the American Colonies and their issue from the Mints of Connecticut and Vermont," 1886. Annotated reprint in CNL-60, p. 747.

⁷ Batty, D. T. *Batty's Catalogue of the Copper Coinage of Great Britain, Ireland, British Isles and Colonies*, 4 vols., Manchester, 1868-98; vol. 3 (1886), p. 970.

become generally known to American collectors until it was included on Vlack's plates nearly nine decades later.

Half as many years before Vlack included an example of Batty 3826 on his revised plates, another British collector, L. F. Hammond,⁸ would also catalog an example of Batty 3826. While one could speculate that the Batty and Hammond specimens were the same example it is equally possible that the Hammond specimen was another, second example. Not only does Hammond plate his specimen but also acutely describes its distinctiveness as "The king's head is small on a thin sinewy neck, the whole resembling a death's head." It is not surprising that Hammond considered it rare, not having seen another specimen, or that it had not yet been documented in America. There is no doubt that this and the variety described by Batty as "very rude" are the same variety, not only because of the date, but also the fact that virtually all specimens exhibit nearly the same or a similar degree of unusual die rotation.

Vlack's plates were obviously based on Betts's earlier work since Vlack had reprinted and distributed Betts's monograph in 1960. Vlack may or may not have been aware of Batty's 3826 or of Hammond's illustrated item 65 when he added this variety to his revised plates in 1974. One could surmise that Vlack decided to include it because of its 1784 date, since several varieties of counterfeit halfpence that did fit into the series were dated 1787 and 1788. However, Vlack had intentionally excluded the much better made 1781- and 1785-dated (Betts 4) counterfeit halfpennies examples documented by Betts, so the date may have been a secondary consideration to its obviously much cruder design. Although Vlack, in his revised plates, was careful to primarily include pieces that fell closely within Betts's guidelines, in a few instances he included specimens that can only be defended on the basis of their crude style.

Eric P. Newman

Eric Newman had cited both Batty and Hammond in his own research, contrasting his own description of the 1784-dated variety with that of Hammond's.⁹ Since 14-84A was obviously not related in any way to the varieties that did fit into the series that Betts and Vlack had linked to the state coinages of Vermont and Connecticut, Newman instead compared the crude style Britannia to that of the early 1785 Connecticut copper reverse dies that he believed it closely resembled. He also described the obverse bust design as emaciated, indicating that this is the way a patriotic American counterfeiter would have wanted George III to have appeared in 1784. Newman's references to Batty's 3826 or Hammond's item 65 are often forgotten by auction house cataloguers, perhaps an unintentional reflection of Newman's more recent research, while Batty and Hammond's description are perhaps conveniently ignored.¹⁰ No one had yet taken the time to do in-depth studies of all contemporary counterfeit halfpence as they just weren't that popular when Newman was writing his research as they have become today. Otherwise, Newman may have realized that there were many British-made counterfeit halfpence varieties that, as far as the crudeness of their design goes, are on par with or considerably cruder than Vlack's 14-84A

⁸ Hammond, L. F., "English Copper Coins and Counterfeits," *Proceedings of the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society* 10, Croydon, 1929, pp. 84-109.

⁹ Newman, *Studies*, p.171.

¹⁰ Stack's, *The Americana Sale*, January 2008, "Selections from the Michael K. Ringo Collection of Contemporary Counterfeit English and Irish Halfpence: Part 1," p. 178; "There are some crude counterfeits, such as the 1784 Vlack 14-84A that is collected with the 'Machin's Mills halfpenny' series, that are found exclusively on our side of the Atlantic, so it is probable that these were meant for American circulation only. It is tempting to state unequivocally that these were also produced here, but without concrete contemporary evidence, nothing can be said with certainty about the location or production of this or other similarly crude counterfeits."



Figure 2: Crude British-made Halfpenny Example. Atkins-95 British evasion copper (top) showing reverse die linkage with crude simian family halfpenny (bottom). [Shown 1.5X actual size.] *Photos provided by the author.*

(see figure 2). Also, Newman's comparison of the Britannia reverse device of Vlack 14-84A with the early 1785 Connecticut copper reverse dies is problematic. William T. Anton, Jr., possibly influenced by Newman's earlier comparison, would later compare another crude style counterfeit halfpenny, known as the "Baby Head," to the Vermont (Ryder 9) "Baby Head" copper.¹¹ Such stylistic comparisons are precarious at best, and just as it has been found with Anton's comparison,¹² no particular 1785-dated Connecticut variety can be found that is stylistically similar enough to link it to that of the crude Britannia device on the reverse of Vlack 14-84A. Also, the legend letter punches of the 1785 Connecticut coppers do not match those found on Vlack 14-84A.

Newman took what, in retrospect, might be looked upon as a novel approach and developed a theory

based on provenance, even establishing a minting location for this one variety of which only a few examples were then known to be extant. A contemporary newspaper account that was repeated in Rhode Island, New York, and Massachusetts between April and May of 1784, implicated a southern Massachusetts town near Providence as a manufacturing source of badly executed "base metal" counterfeit halfpence.¹³ On my reading of this newspaper article, however, it appears to be based entirely on rumor and speculation. Rhode Island even went as far as to pass legislation against these "mixed metal" counterfeits that resulted in only one prosecution against a Connecticut resident, Abner Woodward, which may have been instigated by an informer's desire for a share of the fine. The state granted Woodward's plea for remission of the fine and waived its share of the fine, but the informer kept his. It may not have been so much that the law wasn't enforced as much as it was unenforceable since, as was pointed out by Woodward himself, everyone was exchanging bad coppers for good in trade.

Evidence of counterfeit Spanish dollars possibly emanating from this same area in 1785 is also cited by Newman.¹⁴ However, he goes on to link the earlier newspaper reports with another event that occurred in Boston with the arrest and conviction of a Benjamin Eastabrooks for passing, not

11 Anton, William T., Jr., and Kesse, Bruce, *Forgotten Coins of the North American Colonies*, Krause Publications, Inc. (Iola, WI, 1992), p. 70.

12 Weston, Byron K., "A Survey and Analysis of the 1771 Baby Head Counterfeit Halfpenny," *The Colonial Newsletter: A Research Journal in Early American Numismatics*, Serial No.136, Volume 48, No. 1, April 2008, p. 3231.

13 Newman, *Studies*, pp. 154-55.

14 Newman, *Studies*, pp. 164-65.

manufacturing, “mixed metal” counterfeit halfpence. The arrest of Eastabrooks in the port city of Boston, which was notorious for the importation of spurious halfpence, took place on February 7, 1786, nearly two years later than the newspaper accounts. Eastabrooks was a laborer from Rehoboth, a community close to North Swansea of which Newman says, “Of the communities nicknamed Bungtown it is apparent that North Swansea, Massachusetts, is the only one which is tied in with either counterfeiting of copper coin or with counterfeiting in general.” Perhaps overlooking the fact that the counterfeit halfpence suspected to have been produced in or near North Swansea in the newspaper accounts were cast base metal counterfeits, and not struck light weight copper counterfeits, Newman would speculate that North Swansea was the source for Vlack’s 14-84A variety.¹⁵

Newman also suggested that 14-84A was somehow linked with a petition to the Connecticut General Assembly to obtain the Connecticut franchise to coin coppers. The petition to the assembly, dated October 18, 1785,¹⁶ acknowledges the “vast abundance” of imported British-made counterfeit halfpence. The petitioners, perhaps wanting to make the best case that they could, go on to state, “...that others even of our Countrymen & your Memorialists are sorry to say some, even of their fellow Citizens have attempted the same nefarious Business, and are now Coining and stamping a Copper Coin much under standard weight... .” From this statement Newman was apparently concluding that struck counterfeit halfpence were then being made in America. This isn’t an unreasonable assumption for either the petitioners or Newman to have made, however it is not solid evidence. Like the newspaper accounts, the petitioner’s claims are hearsay. The exact extent of domestic counterfeiting of struck counterfeit halfpence prior to the Machin’s Mills venture, which itself would go unnoticed, cannot be determined from the claims made in this petition. The skills and equipment necessary to make a coin, from creating the blanks, sinking dies, and then stamping them into finished coins, were not widely available. It didn’t take nearly as much effort to melt and pour base (or mixed) metal into a mold to make a coin. Currently the only firm evidence we have for struck counterfeit halfpence having been made in America prior to this time is a military court inquiry a little over a decade earlier where William Gilfoil, a blacksmith and private in the 26th Regiment of the British Army, was accused of making die struck coppers.¹⁷ Vlack 14-84A was likely contemporary with its date, and therefore fits into the same timeframe as those events cited by Newman, however those events do not answer the question of whether it was produced domestically or was an import from Britain.

To this student, Newman’s provenance theory, although well argued, at the end left me unconvinced.¹⁸ Nonetheless, Vlack’s inclusion of 14-84A on his revised plates, along with Newman’s theory, would become the standard justification for auction cataloguers, and subsequent owners of newly discovered specimens to include 14-84A as an American-made counterfeit halfpenny. I believe that the extent of domestic counterfeiting of halfpence, cast or struck, just prior to the Machin’s Mills operation was minimal at best and Vlack 14-84A was much more likely included among the “vast abundance” being imported from Britain.

¹⁵ Newman, *Studies*, pp. 171-72.

¹⁶ Newman, *Studies*, pp. 155-56.

¹⁷ Trudgen, Gary A., “Gilfoil’s Coppers,” *The Colonial Newsletter*, Serial No. 76, Volume 27, No. 2, July 1987, pp. 997-1000, and “Editors Comments” p.1000.

¹⁸ Newman would repeat the North Swansea provenance for Vlack 14-84A, some twelve years later, this time as a statement of fact rather than speculation. Newman, Eric P., “Were Counterfeit Halfpence Dated 1785 Made Specifically For American Use?,” *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 33, 1988, p.208. “The source of the one known variety of a counterfeit British style halfpence dated 1784 (Vlack 14-84A) is attributed to the locale of North Swansea, Massachusetts.”

John M. Kleeberg

In addition to the often repeated American provenance,¹⁹ other assertions concerning this variety are often quoted by cataloguers or in pricelists.²⁰ Thus, a detailed examination of these more recent assertions will be done. Perhaps it should first be noted that the hypotheses put forth by John M. Kleeberg in his paper concerning the Beach-Grünthal Hoard were based in part on the suggestion of Eric Newman. Newman observed that the coins with a curious yellow-green patina, which were part of an accumulation donated to the ANS by Henry Grünthal in 1975, may have come from a hoard. Also, some varieties that Kleeberg defined as Bungtown issues, which includes the lone example of Vlack's 14-84A, should be considered to be of American origin despite a lack of stylistic similarities and shared letter punches or dies with the state coinages, as had been established as the prerequisite by Betts.

Kleeberg grouped these coins together based on similarities in their patination, but this evidence is hard to discern from the black and white plates included with the article. He describes the patination of the 14-84A example as "more brownish than greenish-yellowish, but the coin has enough dirt on it so that I believe it came out of the same hoard." Otherwise, there seems to be no additional evidence that this group of coins (Bungtown issues), which includes the lone 14-84A example, actually had been part of the hoard. What can be said with certainty is that they were part of an accumulation donated to the ANS by Henry Grünthal in 1975, the entire contents of which is not disclosed or discussed in the article.

The provenance of the Atlee/Machin's Mills issues, the Rosa Americana penny, and the New Jersey coppers that were included in the combined partial grouping from the 1945 Harry Prescott Clark Beach and 1975 Henry Grünthal donations to the ANS is well established. However, the American-made provenance assigned to the Bungtown counterfeit halfpence that Kleeberg included in this grouping, numbers 28 through 34, should be questioned. Number 28 appears to be a 1752-dated British-made counterfeit, most likely struck during the reign of George III when the number of struck counterfeit halfpence overtook those made by casting. Of the three cast counterfeits, numbers 32, 33, and 34, the most likely candidate for having been made in America is number 34, a cast counterfeit of a genuine 1749 halfpenny. Kleeberg's assumption that a British manufacturer making George II counterfeits for export during the mid-eighteenth century would have been struck rather than cast may be in error. While there is evidence that suggests a few counterfeiters may have begun making struck counterfeits in the early 1750s,²¹ other evidence indicates that imported counterfeits continued to be predominantly cast, and were imported in great quantities.²² It may have been some time before struck counterfeit halfpence became more commonplace than cast counterfeits, most likely not until the regal George III, 1st issue halfpence began to be produced by the Royal Mint. Relatively few cast contemporary counterfeits of George III are available to modern day collectors as compared with the large number of George II cast counterfeits. More recent studies of struck counterfeit George II

19 *The Thirteenth Annual C-4 Convention Sale*, December 1, 2007, lot 79, p. 28. "Vlack 14-84A is not a product of the Machin's Mills mint. What it has in common with those coins is its status as an American made Imitation British Halfpenny, and a Vlack series variety designation."

20 For example, see Rosa Americana, LTD., *Fixed Price List Number Eighteen*, Autumn, 2007, lot 567, p. 192.

21 Selgin, George, *Good Money: Birmingham Button Makers, The Royal Mint, and The Beginning of Modern Coinage*, The Independent Institute, 2008, p. 31. "Up to midcentury, all counterfeits were cast rather than stamped,...In the early 1750s, counterfeiters began using screw presses...."

22 Scott, Kenneth, *Counterfeiting in Colonial New York, Numismatic Notes and Monographs No. 127*, The American Numismatic Society, 1953, pp. 102-9.



Figure 3: 1749 Counterfeit English Farthing and Halfpenny. A cast 1749 farthing (top) possibly made in America. A struck counterfeit 1749-dated halfpenny (bottom) purchased from a British seller. It is likely that the halfpenny was made in Great Britain during the reign of George III and backdated. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] *Photos provided by the author.*

halfpence reveal that many varieties can be linked with struck counterfeit George III halfpence that were made well into the 1790s. Also, the coinage apparatus for striking counterfeits during the mid-eighteenth century was not sufficient for a massive exportation of struck counterfeit halfpence as it had become in the late eighteenth century when there were estimated to be over 50 counterfeit minting operations.²³ While it certainly is possible that numbers 32 and 33 could have been cast in America it is considerably more likely they were contemporary imports. Many George II cast halfpennies can still be found in group lots or are offered individually in online auctions by British sellers. Of the three cast counterfeits, the 1749-dated specimen, number 34, has a much greater likelihood of having been cast in America. This is due to the shipment of halfpence

and farthings of that date aboard the ship *Mermaid*. A struck counterfeit of this date would have been likely made in Britain, probably during the reign of George III (see figure 3).

Numbers 29 and 30 are crude Irish counterfeit halfpence. The patina of number 29 fits the yellow-green criterion set forth by Newman while number 30 did not, being described as "the obverse is almost white." Dr. Philip Mossman offered an opinion about number 30, an Irish halfpenny overstruck on a double struck British George III halfpenny. Mossman stated, "...it would make no sense to overstrike an Irish coin on an English one because English coins are worth more. The one place where it would have been practical would be in the United States, where the values were equal." This evaluation needs to be reconsidered since we now know that many of the British counterfeiters were not only striking many of the cruder counterfeits but were also simultaneously making both English and Irish counterfeits. They were also illogically combining dies resulting in mulings,²⁴ as well as re-striking similarly spoiled British counterfeits with counterfeit Irish halfpenny dies (see figures 4-8).

23 Selgin, George, *Good Money*., as above. "By the midnineties, there were over 50 counterfeit manufacturing operations at work, mainly in Birmingham, London, and Bristol, with several large-scale operations running several presses at once."

24 Ringo, Michael K., "The Georgivs Triumpho Token," *The Colonial Newsletter*, Serial No. 100, Volume 35, No. 2, July 1995, pp. 1515-20.



Figure 4: Crude British-made Irish Halfpenny Example. Atkins-97 British evasion copper (top) showing reverse die linkage with crude simian family Irish halfpenny (bottom). This, along with figure 2, indicate a British rather than an American connection for crude style counterfeit halfpence. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] Photos courtesy of David Palmer and Jeff Rock.

For several decades both American and Canadian collectors have been mesmerized by the notion that a crude design style indicates an American or Canadian provenance or manufacture.²⁵ This idea has always been just an opinion, however, we now know it to be categorically false as there are plenty of other crude counterfeit halfpenny varieties that are known to be of British manufacture. It is far more likely that either or both of the crude Irish pieces illustrated by Kleeberg as numbers 29 and 30 were made in Britain, or even in Ireland, rather than in America or Canada.

This leaves us with Kleeberg's number 31, another example of Batty's 3826, Hammond's item 65, and Vlack's 14-84A. Kleeberg's evidence for its American provenance consists of the following arguments; "...its presence in this hoard confirms its American origin...another argument for its American circulation and its American origin is its occurrence in old collections. Just

as we find numerous 1749 halfpence in old collections, so we also find this piece. In addition to the two pieces in the ANS collection, for example, I came across one in November 1994 in the numismatic collection of the University Libraries of Notre Dame." There are several flaws within these pronouncements, the first of which is that Kleeberg has accounted for only one such specimen in his argument as allegedly being part of a hoard or part of a proper collection. Although the second specimen at the ANS is part of the ANS collection, it was not shown by Kleeberg to be part of a hoard or collection, but rather just another example that can be found among other coins in the possession of the ANS. The same can be said of the Notre Dame specimen. Regardless of whether any of these specimens, including Kleeberg's number 31, can be shown to be part of a hoard or collection is irrelevant as we cannot be certain from where they originated before becoming part of a hoard, collection, or an accumulation of coins. This does not point to an American provenance. Kleeberg's association with the cast 1749 halfpenny is also misleading in that the genuine specimens that arrived aboard the *Mermaid* were released into American circulation in 1750, obviously well before the creation of Vlack's 14-84A, which was most likely made around the time of its date, 1784. This does not add to his argument that 14-84A is American but only weakens it as there is no association between those 1749 halfpence,

²⁵ Lorenzo, John, "Canadian Blacksmith Wood 38 Family – With a Synopsis of Wood 33-46 Blacksmiths," *The C4 Newsletter*, Spring 2008, Volume 16, Number 1, p. 50. "It seems that when we have considered degrees of crudeness for these contemporary counterfeits in terms of their probable manufacturing location, we have tended to think Great Britain (slightly crude), America (moderately crude), and finally Lower Canada (highly crude)."

genuine or cast, and 14-84A. Kleeberg's arguments also do not take into account or give consideration to other British counterfeit halfpence that might be found in a similar accumulation or hoard, like those in the Stepney, Connecticut, Hoard or those found in the Yale College collection by Betts. Nor does it explain how they might have all come together or where any individual coin was made. The presence of any particular coin in such a collection or hoard does not determine its origin or place of manufacture. If such an assumption is made for one coin then the same assumption must be made for every coin, which obviously cannot be done.



Figure 5: Crude English and Irish Halfpennies. Crude, hand-engraved English and Irish specimens with style similarities that suggest the dies were made by the same engraver. Several examples of these specimens have been recently obtained from British sellers. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] *Photos courtesy of Roger Moore and the author.*



Figure 6: Interlocked George III English and Irish Counterfeit Halfpennies.

(Top) Generic English halfpenny. (Middle) Generic Irish halfpenny. (Bottom) Halfpenny mule struck with the English obverse die and a reverse die that is almost identical to the generic Irish halfpenny reverse die. Die linkage, design style, and letter punch linkage tie these coins together. This group of linked halfpennies is also tied to the 1783-dated Georgivs Triumpho token as shown by Mike Ringo in his 1995 article (see footnote 24). [Shown 1.5X actual size.] Photos courtesy of David Palmer and the author.



Figure 7: Interlocked George II English and Irish Counterfeit Halfpennies.

(Top) Generic English halfpenny. (Middle) Generic Irish halfpenny. (Bottom) Mule combining the Irish obverse die with the English reverse die. As with the previous figure, this grouping is also linked via style and letter punches. Importantly, the letter punches of this group are the same as the figure 6 group showing that this George II group of halfpennies was made during the same time period as the George III group. It also shows that the counterfeiters were simultaneously producing English and Irish halfpence. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] *Photos courtesy of David Palmer and Jeff Rock.*



Figure 8: Irish Counterfeit Halfpenny Struck Over a Spoiled English Counterfeit Halfpenny. The spoiled English undertype shows a partial obverse brockage visible on the Irish obverse and an off-center English obverse visible under the Irish reverse. Both coin types were probably made by the same counterfeit coinage operation. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] *Photo provided by the author.*

Overview

It becomes obvious that Vlack's 14-84A was treated differently because of its crude design style which wasn't applied to the better made 1781-dated counterfeit halfpennies that were known to both Batty and Betts. While Newman conceded that 1781-dated counterfeit halfpence apparently circulated contemporaneously in both England and America he did not make a similar determination for Vlack's 14-84A, even though it had been known to Batty in England but not to Betts in America. The documentation of an example by Batty should have pointed to contemporaneous circulation in England, just as it had

for the 1781-dated counterfeit. Perhaps even more so since no example of 3826/14-84A was documented by Betts among both British-made and Atlee/Machin's Mills counterfeit halfpence found in the Yale College collection.

I believe that it is far more likely for a crudely styled counterfeit halfpenny to have been made in Great Britain, or perhaps even Ireland, rather than the United States or Canada. In fact, a rather large family of counterfeit halfpence, coin y, share the same predominate traits or characteristics of 3826/14-84A; an engraved date and central devices, but the legends were completed using letter punches (see figure 9).

The original assumption that a crude design style indicates American provenance for counterfeit halfpence has been wrong since it was first suggested. Betts was right to have set the prerequisite that only those counterfeit halfpence that could be tied through design style similarities, letter punch links, and/or die sharing with the state coinages could be considered to be of American origin. As we have seen, Newman and Kleeberg both thought they had provided sufficient evidence for American provenance (textual evidence in the case of Newman and the Montclair Hoard in the case of Kleeberg) but there are problems with both of their arguments.

When an example of Batty's 3826 was first included on Vlack's plates as 14-84A in 1974 this variety was given a rarity rating of 8. Thirty years later, in 2004, the rarity rating had been lowered to 5+, or essentially ten times more specimens than originally thought to exist, with additional examples coming to light every now and again.²⁶ This is interesting because in the nine decades, or nearly three times as many years previous to 1974, 3826/14-84A had remained largely unknown to American collectors, except for a brief mention of a 1784-dated halfpenny by Newman in 1959.²⁷ Where have these additional specimens come from after 1974?

²⁶ Personal email communications with Ed Sarrafian, 10/6/08.

²⁷ Newman, Eric P., "The Machin's Mills Mint Near Newburgh, NY," *Empire Topics*, Issue No. 7, August-September 1959. "There are hundreds of varieties of British halfpence dated from 1770 to 1775, and a few dated 1781, 1784, and 1785. While virtually all of these are of British or Irish origin, a few may be Machin's Mills or other American pieces. Many a collector's junk box has American pieces of this type in it, but there they remain unidentified."



Figure 9: Coin y Family Examples. Representative examples from the Peck, plate 50, coin y family of counterfeit halfpence. Coin y is a large family of counterfeit halfpence, where many examples were prepared using puncheons for the legend letters while the date and central devices were hand engraved. This family displays similar traits and characteristics to that of 3826/14-84A. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] *Photos courtesy of Roger Moore, David Palmer, and the author.*



Figure 10: Examples of Ground Found Counterfeit Halfpence. An example of 3826/14-84A found in a field in southern New Jersey by metal detectorist Nick Addeo Jr. in 2001. Additional representative examples of counterfeit halfpence varieties are also shown that were found over the years by father and son detectorists Don and Dan Hartman. The 1774-dated halfpenny (Vlack 8-74A) is the only coin in this group known to have been made in America. [The 3826/14-84A (top) is shown 1.5X actual size. All other halfpennies are shown actual size.] *Photos courtesy of Nick Addeo and Don Hartman.*

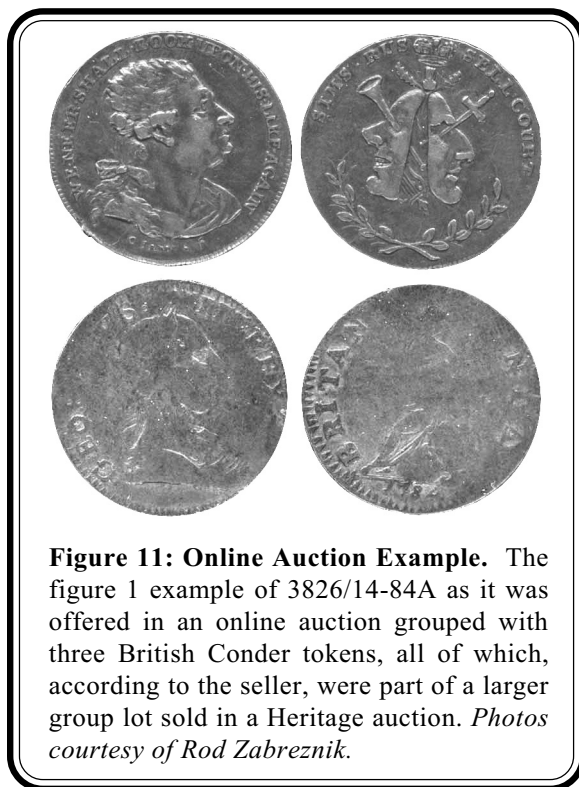


Figure 11: Online Auction Example. The figure 1 example of 3826/14-84A as it was offered in an online auction grouped with three British Conder tokens, all of which, according to the seller, were part of a larger group lot sold in a Heritage auction. *Photos courtesy of Rod Zabreznik.*

Besides those examples housed in institutional collections, like those of the ANS and Notre Dame, several additional examples have been found using metal detectors. More so than its presence in collections or hoards, this fact does point to American circulation for 3826/14-84A. Such finds tend to get more notice than the traditional finds in collections, hoards, or accumulations that often include other British-made counterfeit halfpence which get little notice. Ground found specimens are strong evidence of American circulation, however, it does not point to American manufacture any more than it would indicate a British origin for an Atlee/Machin's Mills specimen found in a collection, hoard, or in the ground in England (see figure 10).

Ground found examples account for perhaps only a handful of the 30+ examples of 3826/14-84A currently known. Most examples found in American collections today were likely already here and as Henry Grünthal had considered them, they were looked upon as "just junk counterfeits," as they had been for so many years. Grünthal

had made his donation of these undesirable counterfeits to the ANS in 1975, and so it is no surprise that his example of 3826/14-84A was found in a tray among evasive and counterfeit English and Irish halfpence as well as Atlee/Machin's Mills issues. Even today counterfeit halfpence are pretty much a mystery to most "mainstream" collectors and dealers, as evidenced by many online auction listings where the seller thought they were something else (see figure 11).

New Evidence

One ground found example of 3826/14-84A, although not found using a metal detector, does perhaps offer a clue as to its origin because of where it was found.²⁸ This example was found sometime in the 1930s or 1940s according to an online Yahoo egroup member by his grandfather on what is known as "Coin Beach," near Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. Several years ago this author examined a hoard of 54 counterfeit halfpence that were also "Coin Beach" finds collected in the 1930s. This hoard contained a nearly equal division of Irish and English halfpence. Original photos of this example more recently shared with the author reveal that the surfaces and patination are consistent with the hoard coins this author examined nearly a decade earlier. Coins found here have traditionally been assigned to the wreck of the *Faithful Steward*,²⁹ whose last port of call prior to sinking off the Delaware coast in 1785 was Londonderry, Ireland. This suggests a possible Irish origin for 3826/14-84A (see figure 12).

²⁸ Howard, Tracy, "Vlack 14-84A," colonial-coins Yahoo egroup, Message thread beginning with Message #45605, January 31, 2006.

²⁹ Kleeberg, John M., "Shipwreck of the Faithful Steward," *Coinage of the American Confederation Period*, The American Numismatic Society, 1996.

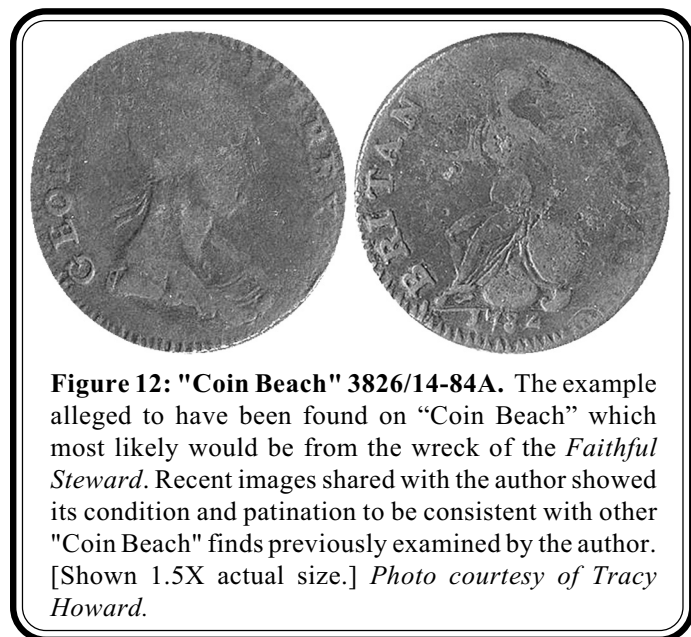


Figure 12: "Coin Beach" 3826/14-84A. The example alleged to have been found on "Coin Beach" which most likely would be from the wreck of the *Faithful Steward*. Recent images shared with the author showed its condition and patination to be consistent with other "Coin Beach" finds previously examined by the author. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] Photo courtesy of Tracy Howard.

The online discussion of this find, along with subsequent discussions,³⁰ revealed that several recently acquired examples of 3826/14-84A came from England. Unfortunately American owners or sellers of such pieces are not so forthcoming with this minor detail about the origin of these specimens. This anecdotal evidence concerning specimens emanating from the other side of the Atlantic, combined with the knowledge that two specimens were documented by Batty and Hammond, suggests that like the 1781 and 1785-dated counterfeits,³¹ 3826/14-84A had probably also circulated contemporaneously in both Britain and America.

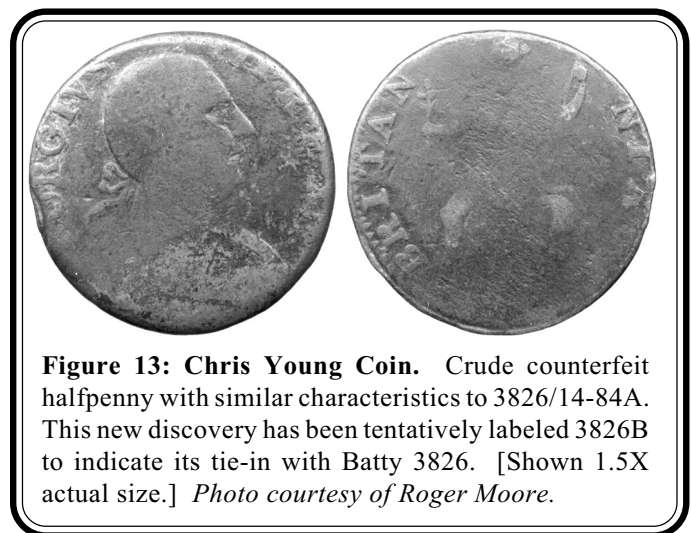


Figure 13: Chris Young Coin. Crude counterfeit halfpenny with similar characteristics to 3826/14-84A. This new discovery has been tentatively labeled 3826B to indicate its tie-in with Batty 3826. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] Photo courtesy of Roger Moore.

Batty3826/Vlack14-84A does not link with the state coinages, Atlee/Machin's Mills counterfeit halfpence, Conder or Evasion tokens, or other counterfeit halfpence families, which placed it in a category by itself. This is no longer true. Several years ago while examining the collection of Chris Young, I came across a crude counterfeit halfpenny that very much reminded me of 3826/14-84A, which he had purchased at a coin show in Delaware (see figure 13).

Although quite worn, the Chris Young coin exhibited flat-footed

Rs, depressions around many of the punched letters, and several hand-cut denticles around the reverse edge, all of which are strikingly similar to that found on 3826/14-84A (see figure 14). It would be several more years before I would see a second specimen of this same variety, this one posted to the colonial-coins Yahoo egroup by Don Hartman (see figure 15).³² Don was gracious enough to send his specimen to Gary Trudgen, while I sent the example of Batty 3826 from figure 1, so that photographic overlay comparisons could be made (see figure 16). Interestingly, not long

30 Rosa Americana, LTD., as above, and colonial-coins Yahoo egroup, Message thread beginning with #52693, December 14, 2006.

31 Weston, Byron K. and Moore, Roger A., "A Comprehensive Study of the 1785-dated Family of Imitation Halfpence," *The Colonial Newsletter: A Research Journal in Early American Numismatics*, Serial No. 132, Volume 46, No. 3, December 2006, pp. 3089–3103.

32 Hartman, Don, colonial-coins Yahoo egroup, Message #55833, May 21, 2007.



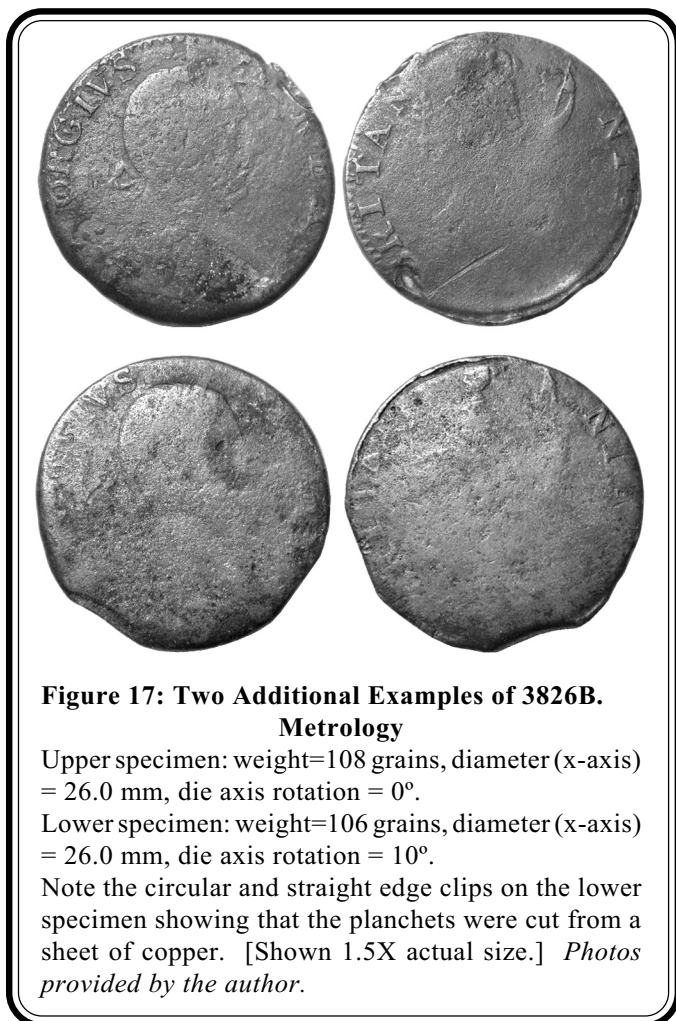
Figure 14: Letter Punch Comparison. A comparison of BRITAN from the reverse legend. The upper image is from figure 13 and the lower image is from figure 1. The Young counterfeit halfpenny specimen shows similarities in the letter punches, depressions around those letters, and the denticles.



Figure 15: A Second Example of 3826B. A ground found example of the same variety as the Chris Young counterfeit halfpenny. Despite displaying a major clipped planchet, this coin shows somewhat more detail. [Shown 1.5X actual size.] *Photo courtesy of Don Hartman.*



Figure 16: Photographically Overlaid Legend Letters. Selected letters overlaid on each other from the Hartman coin in figure 15 and the 3826/14-84A specimen in figure 1. The images from which the letters were obtained were taken with the same photographic setup, thus assuring proper scaling of the images. The opacity of the lower image is 100% while the upper image is at 60% opacity. The overlaid letters show the same shape and size indicating they were made from the same punches.



after the discovery of this second specimen two more examples of this new variety would appear and be sold in online auctions (see figure 17).

All of the known specimens of this new variety show that there were problems with cutting the planchets. A cookie-cutter style planchet press was used that was badly in need of maintenance as evidenced by the ragged cuts and large rim burrs. In addition, each specimen shows no evidence of a date, indicating that one was never cut into the reverse die. Perhaps the die sinker did not have access to numeral punches and decided not to bother with the date. It also suggests that this new variety was produced before 3826/14-84A since the die sinker hand engraved a date on 3826/14-84A and the planchets for this variety were much better cut. It is likely that the counterfeiters replaced the worn-out cookie-cutter on their planchet press with one of a larger diameter explaining why 3826/14-84A is found on significantly larger flans. Although the reverse central devices are decidedly different be-

tween the two varieties there is a striking familiarity between the two obverse devices depicting George III with a distinct and large triangular nose.

Conclusion

Halfpence, which were predominately imported counterfeits, were the most numerous and dominate coin type in Colonial and Confederation era American commerce. Until they were brought to the attention of collectors nearly a century after the end of their circulation, they weren't even considered a part of American colonial coinage. Not only had they been forgotten but they were also largely ignored by collectors who saw them as nothing more than curiosities or even as junk. Even after Betts's monograph it would be another seven decades before, in 1959, Eric P. Newman asked for help in gathering data on Machin's Mills counterfeit halfpence stating, "If the joint efforts of anyone who has any relative data were pooled substantial further progress can result. We are on the threshold of adding a new series of American coins. No fact is too obvious to restudy, no prior statement exempt from challenge, no eighteenth century George III British halfpenny too unimportant to examine. What can you add to this subject? Can you help with your


ideas, your data and information as to your coins? Needles in a haystack can be found, particularly with the magnetism of numismatics.”³³

Five years later Vlack produced his first plates of halfpence that could be considered to have the coveted American provenance, and updated them a decade later. He was careful to primarily include pieces that adhered to Betts's guidelines in his updated plates but, in a few instances, he added pieces that can only be defended on the basis of crude style. Collectors in general continued to neglect the scores of British-made counterfeit halfpence that, by sheer volume, had dominated commerce in Colonial and Confederation America. British-made counterfeit halfpence far outnumbered the combined mintages of all the state coinages, Atlee/Machin's Mills counterfeit halfpence, and the smattering of genuine halfpence that managed to migrate across the Atlantic.

When it came to the odd-dated 1784 Vlack 14-84A variety, Newman also broke with the more narrow Betts's criteria. Moreover, he did not consider its presence in Batty and Hammond as evidence of British circulation. However, he used the same evidence (Batty and Betts) to determine that the 1781-dated halfpenny varieties probably circulated contemporaneously in both Great Britain and America. But, he only found documentation of the 1785-dated halfpenny in America (Betts 4), nevertheless he concluded that it must have been made in England because of its considerably better design style. In effect, Newman had drawn three different conclusions from the same evidence, based chiefly on design style. The logical conclusion should have been that Vlack's 14-84A did circulate contemporaneously in Great Britain.

All contemporaneous counterfeit halfpennies should be studied within the same context. This was attempted by Kleeberg, but with some obvious errors with several of the assumptions. We now know that many crude varieties of halfpence were made in Great Britain, and that it is far more likely that a crudely designed counterfeit came from Great Britain or perhaps Ireland, rather than having been made in the United States or Canada. Many of the crude British-made counterfeit halfpenny varieties could also be described as emaciated, the adjective that Newman used to describe the obverse effigy on 3826/14-84A. Plus, several of the even cruder British-made varieties might be described with an even lesser adjective, such as desiccated, as in corpselike. The myth that a crude design style indicates an American provenance could not possibly be further from the truth.

We now know that some British, and perhaps Irish, die sinkers produced, at the same time, both English and Irish counterfeit halfpenny dies, including more than one monarch. This is basic knowledge to current students of counterfeit halfpence, who have a much greater advantage than Vlack or Newman because of instant communications and photo exchange via the Internet. Also, online auctions have become a tool that can be used to determine where many varieties probably originated, plus information is increasingly obtainable online that was not available to Newman in his research.

Finally, the three dates that most intrigued Newman and that he wrote about, 1781, 1784, and 1785, were likely made in either Great Britain or Ireland, and were exported to and circulated in the United States prior to the Coppers Panic of 1789. Newman's research and writing has always been the main inspiration for this author. This paper, along with many of my previous papers, is in answer to his original request for help in gathering data: “No fact is too obvious to restudy, no prior statement exempt from challenge, no eighteenth century George III British halfpenny too unimportant to examine.” 

33 Newman, Eric P., “The Machin's Mills Mint Near Newburgh, NY,” *op. cit.*

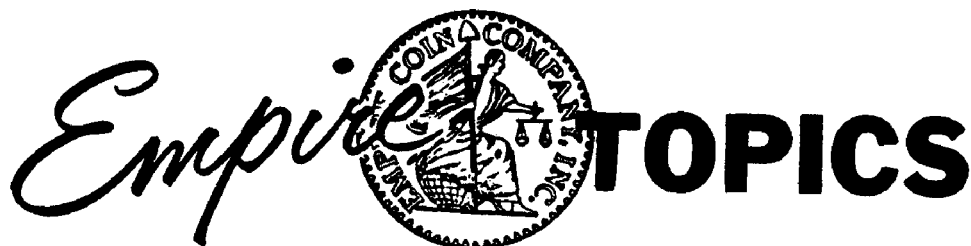
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the actively working Nonregalresearch Yahoo egroup membership for all the work they are doing and the help they have provided to me. I was overwhelmed when I requested images for possible inclusion in this paper and I regret that I wasn't able to use more of the images provided by the membership. I would also like to thank metal detectorists Don and Dan Hartman and Nick Addeo, Jr. for images used in this paper. In addition, I want to thank Tracy Howard, Rod Zabreznik, and Roger Moore for providing additional coin images that were integral to the completion of this paper. Finally, the author is most grateful to John Kleeberg, Philip Mossman, and Eric Newman for their critical review of this paper. They provided many insightful suggestions even though they didn't always agree with the conclusions reached within this paper.

The Machin's Mills Mint Near Newburgh, N. Y.*by Eric P. Newman*

(G16)

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Empire Topics presents an article by Eric P. Newman, well known author in the field of colonial American numismatics. Mr. Newman's works include the standard references for Fugio cents, Continental dollars and colonial Virginia coinage. "The Secret of the Good Samaritan Shilling", Mr. Newman's latest writing, has recently been published by the American Numismatic Society.

The present article is a request for information concerning the somewhat enigmatic Machin's Mills, a private New York state mint in the late 1780's.

A search for facts adding to the knowledge of . . .

**THE MACHIN'S MILLS MINT NEAR
NEWBURGH, N. Y.***by Eric P. Newman*

What occurred in the mysterious operation of the mint for the coinage of coppers erected at Orange Lake, New York, about 1786? When Thomas Machin, a hero of the American Revolution, used land of Governor George Clinton of New York for a "money-making" venture it was hoped that the state of New York would approve a coining franchise for his association as had been granted to others in the neighboring states of Connecticut, Vermont, New Jersey and Massachusetts. Since that did not materialize the group turned to the unauthorized coinage of coppers. If we only knew more about what coins they made we might answer many questions about American coinage during the period before the Constitution.



Genuine and counterfeit British halfpence were circulated freely in the United States before and after the Revolution, and the profit in manufacturing a few more seemed attractive—particularly at Machin's Mills because there was no law against counterfeiting copper in New York at that time. The coins struck at Machin's Mills are as much a part of American numismatics as any other series—even though most of them were imitation British halfpence. Some are dated 1776, 1778, 1787 and 1788, dates when no genuine British halfpence were minted. There are hundreds of varieties of British halfpence dated from 1770 to 1775, and a few dated 1781, 1784 and 1785. While virtually all of these are of British or Irish origin, a few may be Machin's Mills or other American pieces. Many a collector's junk box has American pieces of this type in it, but there they remain unidentified. The Vermont, Connecticut and New Jersey pieces which are candidates for a Machin's Mills source at least are known as well as those with New York and Federal insignia. Yet which were made in Machin's Mills is unknown. It is not even known what coins are referred to in the Connecticut mint report where it is said that Maj. Eli Leavenworth had coppers made in New York (Machin's Mills) which were similar to Connecticut coinages.

For over ten years the writer has been gathering data on Machin's Mills to write up the subject and sincerely needs the cooperation of many numismatists. If the joint efforts of anyone who has any relative data were pooled substantial further progress can result. We are on the threshold of adding a new series of American coins. No fact is too obvious to restudy, no prior statement exempt from challenge, no eighteenth century George III British halfpenny too unimportant to examine. What can you add to this subject?

The records of Thomas Machin are still to be located. They were used by Jephtha R. Sims in *The History of Schoharie County* in 1845 and their whereabouts are unknown. In *The History of Newburgh* by Ruttenber, and the *History of Orange County* by Eager there are comments about the mint. Hickcox was the first numismatist to comment, then Crosby (pp. 172, 190-202, 290, 319 of *Early Coins of America*) adds more data. C. Wyllis Betts first tried to identify Machin's imitation British halfpence in his pamphlet "Counterfeit Halfpence". Kurth in the February 1942 *Numismatist* pushes the frontier forward, then Breen in the January 1952 *Numismatist* described the amazing Fairfield County hoard. In the *Centennial Publication of the American Numismatic Society* the article of the undersigned entitled "A Newly Discovered Coin Solves a Vermont Numismatic Enigma", attempts to explain the relationship between the Vermont coinage and Machin's Mills imitation British halfpence.

Even the term "Bungtown coppers" needs clarification. Many writers have stated that this expression refers to coppers with unofficial legends such as GREGORY III PON, GANGES III RATE, BRITAIN'S HAPPY ISLE or BONNY GIRLS. There is a great probability that Bungtown really means imitation British halfpence with standard legends rather than evasive legends, and that the coppers with evasive legends were never used in America. Has any reader ever found any evidence in letters, newspapers, diaries, hoards, or otherwise that coppers with unofficial legends ever circulated in America? Are not Machin's Mills halfpence some of the true Bungtowns?

Can you help with your ideas, your data and information as to your coins? Needles in a haystack can be found, particularly with the magnetism of numismatics.

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The Somers Isles Hogge Money: A Theory About Their Mysterious Origin

by

Max B. Spiegel; Brooklyn, NY

Introduction

The “Hogge money” of the Somers Isles, now known as Bermuda, has the distinction of being the first coinage struck for the English colonies in America. Nonetheless, relatively little is known about these rare and interesting pieces. While recent research has provided some useful information, the origin of these pieces remains shrouded in mystery. Most numismatists believe that they were struck privately, but I will explore a few interesting connections with the Royal Mint, which I will discuss in detail following a review of present numismatic knowledge.

A Note About Spelling

Early texts use a number of different spellings for the same word. For example, “Somers” is also spelled Sommers, Sommer, Somer’s, and Summer (among others). In addition, both Isles and Islands are used, along with the more archaic spelling of “Ilands.” Although it is spelled Sommer Ilands or Islands on the coins themselves, I have chosen to use the more modern spelling of Somers Isles throughout this article. When referencing the coins, I have also decided to use the spelling “hogge,” which was used by Captain John Smith in his 1624 history. There is no “correct” way of spelling these words, but for consistency’s sake I have tried to only use Somers Isles.

A Brief Overview of the Early History of Bermuda¹

Although to modern readers the connection between Bermuda and the United States may seem somewhat tenuous, the foundations of both were closely intertwined. Bermuda was named for the Spaniard Juan de Bermudez, who visited the islands in 1505. Spain claimed ownership of the islands and a map, published in 1511, identifies the area as *la Bermuda*. A decade later Gonzales Ferdinando d’Oviedo returned to the islands and released some hogs with the hope that their population would quickly grow.² Save for occasional shipwrecked sailors the archipelago, which had acquired the nickname “Isles of Devils,” remained uninhabited for nearly a century after Oviedo’s visit.

Late in the sixteenth century English entrepreneurs, with partial support from the Crown, began efforts to establish colonies in America. Among these ventures was the Virginia Company’s establishment of Jamestown in 1607. The colony, however, had a troubled start and within a couple of years it was on the brink of collapse. Seeking to prevent the settlement’s failure, in the spring of 1609, the Virginia Company sent a flotilla of eight ships carrying a newly appointed governor and supplies. The group began its voyage on June 1, 1609, from Plymouth Harbor, although the flagship the *Sea Venture*³ would not leave until the following day. Within two weeks the *Sea Venture* had reached the rest of the ships.

1 A significantly more detailed account of the history of Bermuda can be found in a variety of sources and I have tried to keep this summary brief for the purposes of the article.

2 The *Guide Book of United States Coins* says that Bermudez is “believed to have stopped there in 1515,” but he probably visited the islands over a decade earlier and there is no evidence to indicate that he accompanied Oviedo in 1615.

3 The *Sea Venture* is the more common name given to this ship, but it is also occasionally referred to as the *Sea Adventure*.

When the fleet was barely a week away from Jamestown it got caught in one of the Atlantic's notorious storms.⁴ The storm that tossed the ships in the ocean is vividly described by William Strachey, the Governor's Secretary, who was aboard the *Sea Venture*. "A dreadful storm ... began to blow from the northeast, which swelling and roaring as it were by fits, some hours with more violence than others, at length did beat all light from the heaven, which like a hell of darkness turned black upon us...."⁵ The ship began to take on water and the sailors searched in vain for the source of the leak.

Everyone aboard the ship took shifts trying to pump and bail the water out, and just when all hope seemed lost, Admiral George Somers shouted that he saw land on the horizon. Still more than a mile from land, Somers ordered the men to unfurl every sail in an attempt to beach the sinking ship as close to shore as possible. The *Sea Venture* became pinned between two rocks about three-quarters of a mile offshore, but amazingly the crew was able to get all the passengers and some possessions safely to shore before the ship's hull split. On Friday, July 29th, 1609, Somers announced to the approximately 150 survivors from the *Sea Venture* that they had landed in Bermuda.⁶

The island, however, proved to be surprisingly hospitable, and on the second night some of the men were awakened by a huge boar, which had been attracted by several sows that the men had salvaged from their ship. After further exploration the men realized that the wild hogs were quite plentiful. Imagine the immense joy that these stranded colonists must have felt. In fact, when Admiral Somers drew a map of the archipelago, he illustrated a herd of hogs on the main island being pursued by a dog and hunters. It therefore comes as no surprise that when the first coins were struck for use on the islands, the obverse design featured a hog.

The stranded passengers and crew, under the direction of Admiral Somers, built two ships—the *Deliverance* and the *Patience*—that took them to Jamestown. These vessels left the islands on May 10, 1610, and anchored at a decrepit Jamestown two weeks later. While Jamestown was on the brink of destruction, tales of the beauty and riches of Bermuda quickly reached the shareholders of the Virginia Company in London. With the hope of establishing a more successful colony on Bermuda, which was renamed the Somers Isles in honor of the now-deceased admiral, plans were quickly made to send colonists to the islands. Less than two years later, during the summer of 1612, the Virginia Company sent the first colonists to the islands aboard the *Plough*.

Prior to his departure for the islands the newly appointed governor, Richard Moore, received word from the company that a token (presumably base-metal) coinage would be sent out on the next supply ship. These coins were to be paid to the company's workers on the island and could be spent at the storehouse. In the interim, until the tokens arrived, wages owed to the workers were credited in the storehouse ledger. There is no evidence, however, that these coins actually arrived on the next supply ship. The famous "hogge money" would not arrive for another four years.

The Somers Isles Company

By 1612, the Somers Isles colony was growing quickly enough that some of the wealthier investors in the Virginia Company decided that a separate charter was necessary. The Virginia Company's rights to the islands were transferred to the Crown in 1614 when a group of 150 of the original

4 An excellent new book about the founding of the Jamestown colony is *Savage Kingdom* by Benjamin Woolley and I have used that text as a reference as well.

5 Strachey, William. *A True Reportory*....

6 Many scholars believe that Strachey's account of the shipwreck of the *Sea Venture* provided the inspiration for Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which was first played on November 1, 1611.

investors petitioned King James I to form a new company—the “Company for the Plantacioun of the Somers’ Ilands”—a request which he granted on June 29, 1615. Among other important rights, the charter of the Somers Isles Company granted the right to manufacture and issue a local coinage. These coins were only to be valid for use on the islands.

An excellent study of the intricate details of the hogge money was written by Mark A. Sportack.⁷ The focus of my research has been on the origins and manufacture of these coins, and I have looked into the possibility that the Royal Mint was involved in the minting of the hogge money. Sportack’s review is excellent and rather than repeat the important information that can be found in his study, I will focus on a theory about the source of these coins.

Charles Anthony

The 150 investors, called “Adventurers” at the time, in the Somers Isles Company were among England’s elite and were all members of the Virginia Company. One of these Adventurers was listed in the company’s charter as “Charles Anthony, Goldsmith.” Anthony (also spelled Anthonie or Anthonye in various texts) was unique among the other investors in that he had an intimate connection with minting: he had followed in his father’s footsteps to become Chief Engraver of the Royal Mint on October 1, 1599. He would continue in that position until his death on October 24, 1615, at which time he was succeeded by his son, Thomas.⁸

Little is known about the specifics of Charles Anthony’s life, let alone about the extent of his involvement in the Virginia and Somers Isles Companies. I have been unable to locate his exact date of birth, but we do know that he married Elizabeth Arnolde, a spinner and daughter of Richard Arnolde, a haberdasher from the parish of St. Martin, Ludgate, on January 13, 1592/3. At that time Anthony lived in the parish of St. John Zachary, London.⁹ He had five siblings, including the more famous Francis Anthony, and at the time of his death he was survived by six children. His will indicates that Charles Anthony died a wealthy man.

Unfortunately, not much more is known about Charles Anthony’s connections with the Virginia and Somers Isles Companies. We do know that he invested £137 10s to become a founding member of the Virginia Company, an amount he would match with his investment in the Somers Isles Company. A sizeable sum at the time, £137 made Anthony one of the larger shareholders in each company. In addition, the Goldsmiths’ Guild, of which Anthony was a member, invested £200. Despite his significant investments, Anthony was still a working class member of each venture and did not travel in the same circles as the gentry and noble investors. Indeed, Anthony’s investments were probably a significant portion of his personal savings given his modest annual salary of £30 from the Royal Mint.¹⁰

The records of the Virginia and Somers Isles Companies are scant for the period of Charles Anthony’s involvement. The important Court Book, which contained the proceedings of the Virginia Company, has only survived from April 28, 1619, onward, and the earlier entries are believed to have been destroyed.¹¹ Any record that could indicate Anthony’s participation in the meetings or his role in company politics probably no longer exists. Although at first glance the records from the years postdating Anthony’s death seem to be of little use, they actually contain a wealth of information about the later involvement of a Dr. Francis Anthony, Charles’s brother.

7 Sportack, Mark A. “The Myths and Mysteries of the Somers’ Ilands Hogge Money.”

8 Challis, C.E. *A New History of the Royal Mint*, p. 269

9 *London Marriage Licenses, 1521-1869*.

10 Challis, C.E. *A New History of the Royal Mint*, p. 298.

11 See Kingsbury, vol. 3, pp. vii-viii.

Francis Anthony and the Virginia Company

On May 21, 1617, the records show that Dr. Francis Anthony purchased eight shares in the Virginia Company and was officially admitted as an Adventurer.¹² He would later increase his investment, and at the time of his death he is believed to have owned 30 shares.¹³ Francis Anthony, the eldest son of the Royal Mint chief engraver, Derrick Anthony, was born on April 16, 1550. After his father's death, Francis, a graduate of Cambridge, tried to become a doctor, but was repeatedly rejected by the College of Physicians. That did not stop him from practicing, however, and he was fined and imprisoned on more than one occasion. It was not until one of his sons, John Anthony, was certified as a doctor that the College of Physicians allowed Francis to begin practicing.

Essentially a quack doctor, the now-Doctor Francis Anthony marketed a concoction he called *aurum potabile* (drinkable gold), which he said could cure any ailment. As he began writing books, Anthony gained influence—even King James I is believed to have been a patron of Anthony! When Charles Anthony died, he stipulated in his will that all of his brother Francis's debts were to be paid off. This gave Francis Anthony a new start and enabled him to purchase shares in the Virginia Company in 1617.

A review of the records of the Virginia Company reveals that Dr. Francis Anthony was active in company's affairs. While an Adventurer he served on several committees and was a participant in their internal affairs. The Court Book shows that between April 1619 and his death in May 1623 Francis Anthony attended at least 37 of the Virginia Company's meetings. Due to the absence of documents from the early years of the Virginia and Somers Isles Companies we can only speculate on Charles Anthony's own involvement. Charles may have been active in the company like his brother, although there is no proof for this. When the Company decided to produce coins Charles, as chief engraver of the mint and a member of the Goldsmiths' Guild, may have offered or been asked to play a role.

Could Charles Anthony Have Minted the Hogge Money?

Many numismatists, including Sportack and Breen, have stated their belief that the base medal composition of the hogge pieces indicates that they were struck privately, probably in London.^{14, 15} While documents identifying the exact origin of the Somers Isles coins have yet to be discovered, I will explore a theory that these pieces were designed by Charles Anthony and struck at the Royal Mint.

Anthony was a logical choice for producing the hogge money. Not only was he the Chief Engraver of the Mint in London, but he was also a notable shareholder in the Somers Isles Company. Besides engraving for King James, Anthony did work for Prince Henry, who was a supporter of the Virginia Company. While Anthony is known conclusively to have engraved the Great Seal of England, he is also thought to have produced the seals for the Virginia Company and possibly the Somers Isles Company. In fact, since 1551 the Great Seals of the Realm and other State seals were cut almost exclusively by mint engravers, albeit in an unofficial capacity outside of their normal duties.¹⁶

12 Kingsbury, vol. 3, p. 58.

13 White, F. V.. "Anthony, Francis (1550–1623)." *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/590>>.

14 Breen, *Complete Encyclopedia*, p. 10.

15 Sportack, Mark A. "Somers' Ilands Hogge Money," pp. 24-25.

16 Craig, Sir John. *The Mint – A History of the London Mint from A.D. 287 to 1948*, p. 132.

Unfortunately, it appears that any contemporary evidence that reveals who engraved the original seals for the Virginia and Somers Isles Companies with any certainty has been lost to posterity. Although the company seals are mentioned with relative frequency, the scarcity of records prior to 1619 leaves a significant gap in knowledge about their manufacture. On November 3, 1619, it was noted in a meeting that the company needed a “Legalle seal,” and Sir Edwin Sandys was appointed to devise one. The minutes of the next meeting, held on November 15, 1619, contains the following important passage:

Touching the Legall seale spoken of in the last Court, the Auditors at their Assembly haue therein taken some paynes, w^{ch} they now presented to this Courte: And whereas they had spoken to one for the cutting of it, there is one m^r Hole who would appropriate that vnto him self vnder the pretence of hauing a Pattent for the engrauing all seales, w^{ch} hath the Kings Armes or any part thereof, w^{ch} he now presented to the Court, and m^r Trer perusing the same, found, that is was for the Kinges armes, but not for any part thereof, and therefore appointed them to repaire to m^r Xofer Brooke of Lincolnes Inne to examine it, and to bring his opinion vnder his hand in writing, & accordingly it should be determined.¹⁷

The Mr. Hole referred to is William Holle (or Hole), who succeeded Charles Anthony’s son, Thomas, as the Chief Engraver at the Royal Mint on May 29, 1618.

The original patent granted to the Virginia Company by King James I on April 10, 1606, said that each of the two colonies (Virginia and the failed colony in New England) was to have a council of 13 people and its own seal with the King’s arms on one side and his portrait on the other.¹⁸ The seal of the first colony (Virginia Company of London) would have the legend: SIGILLUM REGIS MAGNAE BRITANAE, FRANCIAE, and HIBERNIAE on the obverse, with PRO CONCILIO PRIMAE COLONIAE VIRGINIAE on the reverse. The second colony’s (Virginia Company of Plymouth) seal would be the same except the reverse legend would be changed to PRO CONCILIO SECUNDAE COLONIAE VIRGINIAE. A council governing both colonies was to be located in London and have the same seal except for a slightly modified reverse legend: PRO CONCILIO SUO VIRGINIAE. The design of the seal cut by William Holle in 1619 is decidedly different from the design stipulated in the Virginia Company’s 1606 charter. Although some sources have said that William Holle engraved the first seal of the Virginia Company, his seal is merely the only one mentioned in a surviving document. It would be highly unlikely that the Virginia Company would have operated without a seal from its establishment in 1606 until late 1619.¹⁹

¹⁷ Kingsbury, p. 262.

¹⁸ The charter of April 10, 1606, actually created two separate companies: the Virginia Company of London (referred to as the first company) and the Virginia Company of Plymouth (the second company). The Virginia Company of London was given the right to establish a colony between the 34th and 41st north latitudes, while the Virginia Company of Plymouth was allowed to settle between the 41st and 45th north latitudes. Each was granted the territory from the sea to 50 miles inland. Although the first company established the successful Jamestown colony, the second company failed after it attempted to settle in Maine. It was later resurrected and would establish the colony of Massachusetts Bay in 1620.

¹⁹ William Holle’s seal featured “an escutcheon quartered with the arms of England, France, Scotland and Ireland, with crest of bust of a maiden queen with flowing hair and eastern crown, and supporters of two men in armor, beavers open, helmets ornamented with three ostrich feathers, each holding a lance. Motto: EN DAT VIRGINIA QUINTUM” (*Abstract of the Proceedings of the Virginia Company of London*). More information can be found in R. A. Brook’s notes in the *Abstract of the Proceedings*, as well as Neill’s *Virginia Vetusta* and his *History of the Virginia Company*. It is extremely unlikely that Holle could have also engraved the original seals for the company, considering the earliest dated examples of his work are plates of maps in a book dated 1607. He would not receive an appointment to the Royal Mint until the middle of 1618.

Alexander Brown, in his *Genesis of the United States*, gave a brief biography of Charles Anthony, in which he said: "He [Anthony] engraved the stamps for the East India moneys, and I am quite sure, engraved the seals for the Virginia companies."²⁰ Brown was speculating, but it is possible that Charles Anthony did engrave the seals for the Virginia Company. Not only was he the Chief Engraver of the Royal Mint (the same position Holle would hold when he engraved the company seal) and the engraver of the King James I's Great Seal, but he was also an investor in the venture. Considering how closely intertwined the Virginia and Somers Isles Companies were, it is possible that the same person—namely, Charles Anthony—would have engraved both seals.

When the Somers Isles Company decided to produce coins it is possible that Charles Anthony was approached by his fellow investors to cut the dies or offered his services as the Royal Mint's Chief Engraver. That Anthony would have engraved coins outside of his normal duties as Chief Engraver is not without precedent. The East India Company, for example, paid Charles Anthony for engraving the dies for the so-called "portcullis money," which I discuss in more depth later. Also, in 1601 Lord Buckhurst, the Lord Treasurer, asked Anthony to engrave the dies for a debased Irish coinage, which would be issued in 1603 and 1604. These pieces had a mixed-metal composition, with the shillings, sixpences, and threepences containing three-fourths copper and one-fourth silver. It is also important to note that, on May 19, 1613, James I prohibited the production of private tokens. This law, however, was not entirely effective and three further proclamations were issued that reiterated the ban on all privately minted tokens. Technically only Lord Lennox (see below) had the legal right to mint tokens, although other people did possess the skills needed to do so. Charles Anthony could have been chosen to engrave the hogge money, given his investment in the Somers Isles Company and his position at the Royal Mint. Some numismatists have cited the base metal composition of the Somers Isles coinage as evidence that they were struck by a private mint, but Anthony had already been involved in the production of coins that contained minimal amounts of silver.²¹ I will further explore the possibility of Anthony's role in the production of the Somers Isles coinage later in this article.

A Note About "Secret Markings"

The Somers Isles coins feature peculiar arrangements of pellets or dots below the hogge on each denomination. Sportack writes that these markings are, more likely, purely for aesthetic purposes and not the "secret" identification marks of the diesinker or some sort of anti-counterfeiting measure. He notes that most shillings have one pellet between the hog's legs, the sixpence have four pellets arranged in a diamond shape along with a tuft of grass, the threepence have five pellets that resemble a flower, and the twopence have a star-shaped design that is often considered to be a flower. Sportack's belief that "these secret markings were nothing more than the innocuous creative attempts by the die-sinker" seems to be a reasonable explanation for their presence. As he points out, "All of the secret markings can be interpreted as natural objects that could be found in the Somers' llands, including flowers, rocks, and tufts of coarse grass."²²

The Two Minters Theory

There are four denominations of hogge money: the shilling, sixpence, threepence, and twopence. For over a century there have been rumors of a groat and penny, but these pieces have not been confirmed. A gold "one pound" coin surfaced in the late nineteenth century but it has since been proven to be a fabrication. Some of the most important research about the Somers Isles coins had

20 Brown, Alexander. *Genesis of the United States*, p. 814.

21 Burn, Jacob Henry. *A Descriptive Catalogue...*, p. xxxv.

22 Sportack, pp. 95-96.

involved the discovery of new dies and die combinations. In addition to identifying new varieties, numismatists have long questioned why some planchets were thick and others thin, as well as why some coins are “silvered” and others not.²³ The significant differences between the planchets led Malcolm E. Williams, Peter T. Sousa, and Edward C. Harris to theorize that the Somers Isles coins were actually struck in three batches.²⁴

Sportack discusses several theories regarding the different planchet thicknesses and the presence or absence of tinning. Many have believed the thicker pieces were struck first and then, in an effort to save money, the weights of the planchets were reduced. Another possibility is that two (or more) minters were employed to strike the coins. This theory is often disregarded because, as Sportack writes, “If two minters were used, and each cut his own dies, there would be noticeable dissimilarities between obverse/reverse die combinations rather than just dissimilarities on one of the two sides.”

What if there were two engravers employed, but they were father and son who both worked at the Royal Mint? Charles Anthony was Chief Engraver of the Tower Mint at the time he bought a share in the Somers Isles Company. If we assume that soon after the company was established on June 29, 1615, Anthony was commissioned to manufacture the coins explicitly authorized by charter, he would have had until his death on October 24 of that year to strike these coins. His son, Thomas, then took over his duties as Chief Engraver. The Anthonys may have rented or “borrowed” the Royal Mint’s facilities to strike the hogge money. Considering they were engravers and not coiners, they may have employed staff to produce the tokens for them.

Anthony’s will contains several important pieces of information. First, it names the surviving members of his family, including his wife, Elizabeth, and seven children, Thomas, Richard, Charles, James, Andrew, Edward, and Mary. It also notes his “adventure unto the Sommer llandes” as well as his investment in the Virginia colony. Significantly, the will leaves “to eldest sonne Thomas all my goldsmiths tooles partes presses patterns and prints of seales and all books and papers.” Based on the items bequeathed to Thomas, we can infer that Charles Anthony was often involved in the production of seals. It is probable that once Thomas had completed his apprenticeship he became a partner with his father and then inherited the business upon Charles’s death. He also succeeded his father as Chief Engraver at the Royal Mint. If Charles Anthony engraved the dies for the hogge money, then Thomas would have been able to continue with its production.

In his *Complete Encyclopedia of U.S. and Colonial Coins*, Breen writes that he has observed one variety of shilling (Small Sails, Breen-2) with rust near the obverse letters.²⁵ Breen writes that the obverse of both shilling varieties are the same, but the obverse die must have been set aside after striking Breen-1 where it rusted, only to be used again at a later time. Since, as Sportack notes, the coins were not made of a ferrous metal, it could only have been the dies that were rusted. The Somers Isles Company probably kept ownership of the hogge money dies, and they would have kept them in storage until more coins were needed. Had the dies been stored at the Royal Mint they would have been in the more capable hands of the Keeper of the Irons and most likely would not have rusted in such a short amount of time. This seems to show that, even if Charles Anthony engraved the dies, the hogge money was probably not struck at the Royal Mint.

23 Recent metallurgical research by the Bermuda Monetary Authority has proven that this “silvering” is actually tin. I discuss this experiment later in the article.

24 Williams, Sousa, and Harris. *Coins of Bermuda, 1616-1996*, pp. 43-44, and Sportack, pp. 32-34.

25 Breen, *Complete Encyclopedia*, p. 10.

Hogge Money Shillings

Both varieties were struck with the same obverse die.



Breen-1, Large Sails. [Sportack XII/01/02. Bermuda Maritime Museum specimen 11312.]
This variety is extremely rare and most examples are heavily corroded.



Breen-2, Small Sails. [Sportack XII/01/01. Bermuda Maritime Museum specimen 11326.]
Note the deterioration of the S's at the top of the obverse.

The poor storage of the hogge money dies by the Somers Isles Company would account for the rust observed on Breen-2 shillings. The die deterioration is particularly noticeable in the S's, which appear more as 8's on late specimens. The authors of *The Coinage of the Bermudas*²⁶ offered a theory that the coins were struck in three batches:

- 1) Thick Planchets
- 2) Thick Planchets, Silvered
- 3) Thin Planchets, New Dies, Silvered

One problem with this theory is the presence of thick and thin planchet examples for each variety. Heidi Leseur's list of the Castle Island coins shows a wide weight range for all sixpences and shillings, regardless of varieties. For example, she writes that the Small Porthole sixpences range from 2.10 grams to 3.67 grams, while the Large Porthole sixpences range from 2.42 grams to 3.41 grams.²⁷ Breen reports a similarly wide weight range for the sixpence he observed.²⁸ Unfortunately, many of the unearthed examples are heavily corroded, making it difficult to identify any deterioration in the lettering or designs. If the coins were struck in three batches, the varieties should differ from one another in terms of weight.

Nonetheless, it does appear that there was more than one batch of hogge money struck. Although weight may not be a factor in determining the order that the different varieties were minted, the presence and absence of "silvering" may indicate that hogge money was struck on at least two different occasions. Additionally, the pairing of the obverse shilling die with the Small Sails reverse appears to have been done after the obverse had been paired with the Large Sails reverse. This is because there are no indications of die rust on the obverse die when joined with the Large Sails reverse, but we do notice indications that the obverse die had rusted before it was joined with the Small Sails reverse. Also, the newly discovered sixpence obverse by the Bermuda Maritime Museum seems to hint that a different engraver made that die than the other sixpence obverse. The original obverse featured the spelling ILANDS, while the second obverse changed the spelling to ISLANDS. If one engraver made both dies the spelling would probably have been the same, but the presence of the additional "S" may be the added touch of a different engraver. It is important to note that the shilling also has the ISLANDS spelling.

It appears that thick and thin planchet specimens were struck concurrently based on the wide range of weights for each variety, repudiating the "three batches theory" advanced by *Coins of Bermuda*. As to die combinations, one obverse and two distinct reverse dies were used to strike shillings, at least two obverse and reverse dies were used to strike sixpences, and two obverse dies were combined with one reverse die to strike twopences. Only one die marriage is known for the threepence. One of the two sixpence obverses is a recent discovery from the Castle Island find and both of the recovered specimens were joined with the Small Portholes reverse. Sportack may have also found a third sixpence obverse die. The quantity of sixpences minted was likely larger than the quantity of shillings, which explains why more sixpence dies are known. This is also supported by the Castle Island find, which unearthed 16 sixpences but just three shillings.

Based on the above observations it is possible—if not probable—that there were two engravers for the Hogge money series. If Charles Anthony engraved the original set of dies, they would likely have been stored by the Somers Isles Company until more coins were needed. Following Charles's death, his son Thomas could have been commissioned by the Company to engrave new dies after

²⁶ Williams, Sousa, and Harris. *Coins of Bermuda, 1616-1996*. Although these authors described the coins as being "silvered," it is now known that they were, in fact, tinned. This does not necessarily affect their theory that the coins were struck in three batches.

²⁷ Leseur, p. 40.

²⁸ Breen, p. 10.

the earlier ones were no longer usable, explaining some of the differences between the dies. "Silvering" may have been added at some point to give the coins the appearance of having intrinsic value, but since it appears on both thick and thin specimens it cannot be said conclusively whether it was a part of the initial emission that was later abandoned to reduce costs or if it was a later addition that was included to make the hogge money look more like sterling coinage.

Time of Manufacture

Another question involves the dates at which the different batches of hogge money were struck. Although base metal coins had been promised as early as April 27, 1612, it seems that the turmoil within the Virginia Company at that time forestalled the actual manufacture of these coins for another three years. There are no known records that indicate when, where, or by whom the Somers Isles pieces were struck. Until some conclusive evidence surfaces, and such evidence may not exist, we may never know for certain who struck the hogge money.

There are, however, a few contemporary references to the hogge money, and these snippets of information can help piece together the story of this mysterious coinage. When a new governor, Daniel Tucker, arrived at the Somers Isles on May 16, 1616, he carried instructions that said a base metal coinage would be sent along with provisions. Several ships brought supplies to the Somers Isles from England after Tucker's arrival on the *George*, but it is not known which one carried the hogge money. Louis Jordan writes that since no ships arrived in the Somers Isles from England in 1617 "it appears likely the coinage arrived in the islands sometime during the first six months of Tucker's tenure, that is, between his arrival on May 16, 1616, and the end of 1616."²⁹ Sportack extrapolates from this that hogge money pieces "were likely minted during the winter of 1615/16."³⁰

On July 29, 1615, the Somers Isles Company incorporated under a royal charter that granted it the right to distribute coins for use among the inhabitants of Bermuda. With the support of the charter, the Somers Isles Company could legally contract to have coins minted. If Charles Anthony was chosen to engrave the coins, he would have had until his death on October 24, 1615, to make the dies. This does not explain why the company would have waited until the second half of 1616 to ship the hogge money to the Somers Isles. Had Anthony engraved the dies, the hogge money would likely have been shipped to Bermuda as early as nine months prior to Tucker's arrival. Sportack believes that the hogge money was minted during the winter of 1615/16, but they may have been struck anytime until the end of 1616, by which point they had reached Bermuda.

Thomas Anthony served as Chief Engraver of the Royal Mint from the time of his father's death until March 31, 1618. Had Charles engraved the dies for the first emission of hogge money, Thomas would have been able to make similar dies for a second batch after his father's death. Perhaps this explains the two different spelling of ISLANDS and ILANDS on the sixpence. By the end of 1617, following the harvest of the first tobacco crop in October of that year, hogge money had fallen out of favor among the inhabitants of islands. Tobacco immediately became the preferred medium of exchange. On January 15, 1618, the company supply ship *Diana* arrived and, rather than bring goods to the company storehouse, sold directly to the colonists in exchange for tobacco. Following the success of the *Diana* the company storehouse on the island was closed and hogge money was no longer necessary.³¹

²⁹ Jordan, Louis. "Somer Islands Hogge Money. of 1616: The Historical Context." *The Colonial Newsletter*, p. 2475.

³⁰ *Money of the Caribbean*, p. 69.

³¹ Jordan, pp. 2482-83.

The hogge money tokens most likely arrived sometime between May and December of 1616, and had fallen out of use within only a year and a half. Sportack wrote³² that the coins were kept in circulation only by the colonists' fear of Governor Tucker's regime, but Jordan provides evidence that the hogge money had lost its usefulness while Tucker was still in power. Although Tucker was certainly not liked by the colonists, the end of his rule was not the reason that hogge money stopped being used. Rather, it was the changing economy of the Somers Isles that brought about the early demise of the hogge money.

Had Charles Anthony engraved the dies for the hogge money before his death on October 24th of that year, the Somers Isles Company would have taken possession of the dies until they needed the coins, but it seems odd that they would have waited nearly a year before striking and sending over the hogge money. The first emission of hogge money (assuming there was more than one striking) would have been produced sometime before the end of 1616. Assuming the Somers Isles Company had ownership of the dies, the shilling obverse probably began to rust while in their possession. When it was determined another emission of hogge money was needed, the Somers Isles Company would have used the old dies for as long as possible. When a die wore out, Thomas Anthony may have been paid by the Company to engrave a new one. This might explain why the spelling differs slightly between some varieties. It appears that the weight range of planchets is fairly wide for all varieties, so it does not seem that thin specimens were necessarily struck after thick examples. The issue of tinning, however, is not easily explained, but it would be a logical addition to a second striking to give the hogge money the appearance of having intrinsic value.

Castle Island

During an archaeological dig about 15 years ago at Castle Island, one of the oldest fortifications in Bermuda, 19 examples of Somers Isles coins were uncovered in the lowest level of debris.³³ Two of these specimens were subjected to metallurgical analysis, which resulted in two important discoveries that I will soon discuss. This find is also significant because it showed that both tinned and untinned pieces circulated contemporaneously. While we cannot say for sure how those pieces ended up in the bottom of a trench filled with garbage, it shows, based on archaeological evidence, that these coins were deposited—possibly as refuse—sometime prior to 1620. Nathaniel Butler, governor of the islands from 1619 to 1622 says that there was a "... base money which, having a hogge stamped upon it on the one side, was, in a scoff, termed by the people 'hogge money.'"³⁴ Although this statement is sometimes taken to mean that the colonists disliked the hogge money, "scoff" did not necessarily have a negative meaning at the time, and was likely meant by Butler to describe a quip by the colonists. In fact, there is no evidence to indicate that the colonists disliked the hogge money or used them only out of fear of Governor Tucker. It is unknown why 19 Somers Isles coins were deposited in a trench filled with garbage, but it is probably not because of contempt for the Tucker administration or the coins.³⁵

32 Sportack, pp. 79-80.

33 Heidi Y. Leseur's article in Volume 10 of the Bermuda Journal of Archaeology and Maritime History gives an in-depth overview of the conservation and examination of the Castle Island pieces.

34 Butler, Nathaniel. *Historye of the Bermudaes of Summer Islands*.

35 Sportack, pp. 88-89. Sportack gives three theories of how the coins ended up in the trench, with the third suggesting that it is "highly likely that the soldiers simply discarded the coins out of contempt for their worthlessness and/or disrespect for their issuing authorities (Tucker and the company)." Hogge money, however, had fallen out of use before the end of Tucker's administration. It is possible that the coins were thrown away, but probably not out of disrespect for the governor and company.

The Minting Process

Recent research by the Bermuda Monetary Authority (B.M.A.) has yielded an enormous wealth of knowledge about the minting process of the hogge money. The method of manufacture has long been described as crude, but it appears that the production of hogge money was significantly more complex than previously believed. There is evidence that the planchets were annealed, which indicates that there was at least minimal effort taken to preserve the dies and/or increase the quality of the strike. Several recently discovered specimens also show impressive strike sharpness.

Two recent discoveries have been the result of metallurgical analysis and have had a great impact on the hogge money series. First, the coins, previously believed to have been brass based on Captain John Smith's *Generall Historie*, are actually made from nearly pure copper. The other major finding proves that the "silver" plating that covers some of the pieces is, in actuality, tin. These important discoveries are crucial in understanding the minting process of the Somers Isles coins.

The Bermuda Maritime Museum (B.M.M.) has performed tests on two of the 19 specimens recently unearthed in a trench on Castle Island. These revealed some facts about the process by which the hogge money pieces were struck. Most importantly, the results showed that the planchets were annealed prior to striking and were subsequently hand-struck with a hammer. Some coins were then dipped in molten tin—undoubtedly contemporary to the striking—which would give the appearance of silver.³⁶

Recent analysis by Gary Trudgen and Mark Sportack has definitively proven that the Somers Isles hogge money was hammered, and not made by a roller press as suggested by Michael Hodder about two decades ago.³⁷ As he will explain in a different article, Sportack has collected significant data that indicates the die rotation differs on individual specimens of a variety. This is undeniable evidence that neither a roller press nor a drop press was employed, and instead suggests a hammer strike since erratic die rotation is a common trait of hammered coinage. Additionally, hogge coins show inconsistent sharpness, which is another indication of hammering. Sportack has also collected several images that show rounded clips, clear proof that a blanking press was used to punch out the planchets, which were subsequently struck using the hammer method. These conclusions are further supported by the Bermuda Maritime Museum's analysis.

It is important to note that the typical method of planchet preparation employed by the Royal Mint at this time involved cast planchets that were progressively hammered and cut to proper size. In

36 Leseur, Heidi Y. "A Note on the Research and Conservation of the 19 Hogge Coins from Castle Island."

37 In the Norweb catalog, Michael Hodder speculated that the hogge money could have been struck by roller dies, but this theory now seems very unlikely. The shilling he describes is clipped, which seems to indicate that these pieces were struck from a rolled strip. He also noticed that the obverse edge is beveled outward, while the reverse edge is not. This would occur if the coin had been cut from a strip of metal after it had already been struck. Otherwise, the beveled edge would have been flattened by the force of the die. Hodder says that this technology was in place at the time and would explain why some of the cons seem to have a "wrinkled" appearance.

As Hodder is quick to point out, however, there are several significant arguments against his theory. Based on the technology of the roller presses, there should be several varieties of each denomination. The small number of varieties of Somers Isles coins known suggest that roller dies, which would feature multiple engravings on each roller, were not employed in the manufacture of the hogge money. Hodder writes that another argument against the use of roller dies is that the Somers Isles pieces do not appear to be concave when viewed from the edge. Typically, coins struck between roller dies show a fairly pronounced bend, a feature which none of the Somers Isles coins—even the large sized shillings—do not exhibit. Most numismatists agree that the hogge money was manufactured using the hammer method.

A New History of the Royal Mint, C.E. Challis provides an excellent summary of this process during the reigns of James I and Charles I:

Once annealed, [the] ingots were then given a preliminary hammering to correct any deformities in the casting... Once more annealed, the ingots were then chopped up... Annealed a third time, these cut pieces were hammered thinner, annealed again, and then hammered again to produce 'planchettes', or thin plates. After a further annealing, the blanks were then given a final hammering... Subsequently, the blanks were trundled, or rolled (presumably on the edge) and flacked, that is to say beaten, to finish it off. A final annealing turned the blanks into 'ready money', which was then blanché and struck between the dies.³⁸

A blanking press apparently was not used at the Royal Mint and planchets were hammered into proper size from pieces cut from a cast ingot. If Sportack's article proves that the hogge tokens were made using a blanking press it would mean that the Royal Mint likely did not strike the hogge money. Charles Anthony could still have engraved the dies for the hogge money, but he would have had to employ other people to strike the tokens. Certainly he would have engraved the dies outside of his regular duties, and he may have contracted with another facility.

Sportack suggests³⁹ that the Somers Isles hogge money shows similarities with the "patent farthings" produced by Lord Harrington from 1613 until his death the next year. Following his death, Harrington's patent was passed on to his son and then his wife, who sold the patent to Lodewiche, Duke of Lennox. All of the Harrington/Lennox farthings appear to have been struck using a roller press, however, which is inconsistent with the way the hogge money was produced. Since the hogge money was hammer struck it does not exactly match the method of manufacture for the patent farthings. In addition, with the death of Lord Harrington in 1614—prior to the manufacture of the hogge money—it seems unlikely that his heirs or Lennox would have been interested in minting hogge money. Only the Somers Isles Company stood to make a profit from the hogge money, which they did by paying colonists in tokens that could only be used at the company store. Nonetheless, a number of individuals worked on the Harrington/Lennox patent farthings, and it is possible that one person (or more) was contracted with to strike the hogge money if it was not struck at the Royal Mint.

The Coins of Charles Anthony

It is difficult to say definitively which coins were engraved by Charles Anthony. Nonetheless, there are several issues which have been assigned to Anthony's workmanship, and we can assume that he had at least some role in the production of coins struck while he was Chief Engraver. For one, Alexander Brown's brief biography of Anthony⁴⁰ says that, "He engraved the stamps for the East India moneys." The court records of the East India Company have an entry dated May 22, 1601, that instructs Alderman Holliday to pay Charles Anthony 29 pounds, 10 shillings "for stampes made for the East Indie monies."⁴¹ This is the so-called "portcullis money," struck at the Tower Mint in 1600-1601 for the first voyage of the "Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies." The East India Company was granted a monopoly to trade in India by Queen Elizabeth on December 31, 1600, and was unique because the company was allowed to export bullion to India, when it was otherwise illegal for gold or silver to leave England. The portcullis money, named for the gate on the reverse, was struck in the denominations of 1, 2, 4, and 8 testerns, mirroring the Spanish 1, 2, 4, and 8 reales.

38 Challis, C.E., *A New History of the Royal Mint*, p. 306.

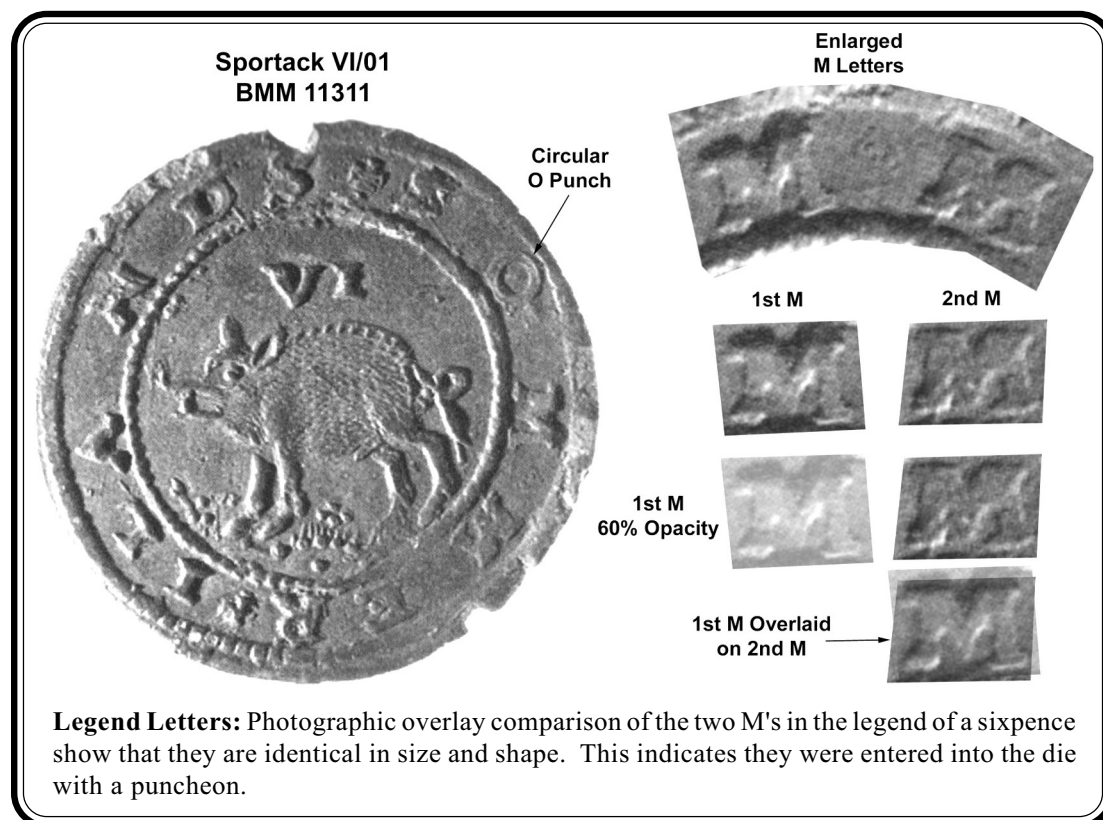
39 Email conversation, November 2008.

40 Brown, Alexander. *The Genesis of the United States*.

41 Stevens, Henry. *The Dawn of British Trade to the East Indies*.

The mint records show that at the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign Charles Anthony was paid 12 pounds for "patternes, ponchions, and workmanship" for the pieces of five shillings and two shillings sixpence.⁴² Although not specific, the coins referred to are almost certainly the new silver crowns and half crowns, struck in 1601 and 1602. These denominations, which had previously been issued in gold, were now struck from large-sized silver planchets. When James I ascended to the throne, Anthony is believed to have engraved dies for the coins that featured the new monarch. In 1603 and 1604 Anthony engraved the dies for a new Irish coinage. Prior to his death in 1615, Anthony probably assisted the other engravers in the production of James I's second coinage, which lasted from 1604-1619. There do not appear to be any documents that indicate how involved Charles Anthony was in these issues, but he must have provided at least some level of supervision or help.

Photographic comparisons of hogge money with the known coins of Anthony did not show any matches. It appears that the punches that we can attribute to Anthony were not used to produce the dies for the hogge money. It is possible that some puncheons were shared between the coins, but Gary Trudgen, an expert in such comparisons, says that he did not notice any distinct similarities. Trudgen noted the inordinately wide D on the shillings to be a peculiar aspect of the Somers Isles coins. Nonetheless, a thorough search of contemporary British tokens did not locate any other tokens that also featured a wide D. It seems that this wide D punch may be unique to the Somers Isles shilling and it is possible (as Sportack suggested to me) that the wide D is really a combination of an I and backwards C. If this were the case, it would be unlikely that the dies were made at the Tower Mint, which certainly had complete sets of punches. However, until the punches used on the hogge coinage have been identified we are unable to corroborate the exact nature of the wide D.



42 Symonds, Henry. *English Mint Engravers of the Tudor and Stuart Periods, 1685 to 1688*.

Several discoveries were made based on the photographic comparisons. The two M's in the sixpence legends are clearly from the same punch, which is important to show that, although the letters appear crude in form, they were definitely made from punches as opposed to being hand-engraved. It also appears that the I's in the legends were the same used to spell the denominations, which shows that multiple punches were used to make XII, VI, III, and II instead of a single gang puncheon. The positioning of the numerals on the shilling illustrated below are not aligned with each other yet each numeral touches the top of the bristles on the back of the hog, which suggests that each digit was added individually after the central design was engraved. Further, the analysis has also shown that the A in the sixpence legends is, in fact, an upside down V with a hand-cut crossbar. Lastly, the rocks and beaded borders were made individually using the same graver's tool, which suggests that the borders were not made using a single gang punch. These findings seem to show that the diecutter did not have an extensive set of punches. This suggests that an engraver at the Royal Mint—especially the Chief Engraver—did not cut the dies for the hogge money. The degree of improvising for missing punches points to a different engraver who was probably not a full-time diecutter and thus did not have a complete set of letter punches. Instead, the engraver had the time consuming task of engraving everything individually with limited resources.

Conclusion

Charles Anthony had connections with both the Somers Isles Company and the Royal Mint, which would appear to make him a logical choice to engrave the dies for the hogge money. Although on the surface this theory seems reasonable, a thorough examination of the tokens points to a private manufacturer. The method of manufacture almost certainly precludes the Royal Mint as the origin. The dies were engraved from an incomplete punch set, the planchets were cut using a blanking press, and the coins were struck in base metal. Further excluding Charles Anthony and the Royal Mint is the fact that the planchets significantly vary in thickness, which would be highly unusual for an issue of the Royal Mint. After a thorough analysis of my original theory about a possible Royal Mint-origin, I think it is safe to conclude that Charles Anthony did not engrave the dies for the hogge money.

Nonetheless, several important discoveries were made during the course of this research, which were detailed above. Photographic comparisons showed some interesting aspects of the engraving and were able to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the Royal Mint and Charles Anthony were not involved in the minting of these tokens. In addition, Mark Sportack is publishing an article about his finds, which include determining the use of a blanking press and the hammer-strike method. All of this suggests that the Somers Isles Company contracted with a private mint, probably a part-time one considering the apparent lack of a complete set of punches that could strike these tokens cheaply for the company. The presence of die rust on one of the varieties of shilling, the two different spellings of ISLANDS used, and the tinning of some specimens seems to point towards the possibility that the hogge money was struck on more than one occasion, possibly by two separate minters. This, however, is not certain.

The dearth of contemporary records or documents relating to the hogge money is unfortunate. Given the probability that these tokens were made by a part-time private minter, it is unlikely that any documents relating to the production of the tokens will surface. We may never know who struck the hogge money, but it is possible that future research will yield answers to some of the other mysteries. The debates between thick and thin planchets, tinned and untinned, one batch versus multiple batches, and one minter versus multiple minters is certain to continue until further discoveries are made.


Sportack XII/01
BMM 11326



Sportack VI/01
BMM 11311



Photographic Comparisons: Several design elements from a shilling and sixpence were overlaid showing the same size and shape. This suggests that the same puncheons were used to create many different design features.

With modern technology (such as metal detectors), the rate at which hogge money is found in Bermuda has vastly increased in the last few decades. As new specimens are discovered, there is the chance that new varieties or other information will come to surface. While we may never know who struck the hogge money, new finds and research will hopefully shed some light on this important coinage. Although it did not last long in circulation, hogge money has the distinction of being the first coinage struck for the British colonies in America. Its study helps contextualize the earliest British attempts at colonizing the New World. 

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1741-dated Counterfeit Halfpenny What'sIt?

from

Clement V. Schettino; Saugus, MA**(TN-205)**

Counterfeit Halfpenny What'sIt?: Dated 1741, weight 126.5 grains, diameter (horizontal x vertical) 28.5 x 27.9 mm, struck coin turn. [Shown approximately 1.5X actual size.] *Photo provided by the author.*



Host Counterfeit Halfpenny: The counterfeit halfpenny variety from which the above What'sIt? was made. This specimen weighs 132.7 grains and the diameter (horizontal x vertical) is 28.2 x 27.9 mm. [Shown approximately 1.5X actual size.] *Photo provided by the author.*

All What'sIt?s that have been previously reported within the pages of *CNL* have been re-engraved state coppers.¹ This What'sIt? is the first known exception. It is a re-engraved 1741-dated counterfeit English halfpenny that was purchased in England. Counterfeit halfpence dated 1741 are very uncommon with only four examples in this author's extensive collection. The host variety of this What'sIt? was recently located and currently is the only specimen known to the author.

The alterations on this What'sIt? primarily consist of a re-engraved and highly detailed obverse effigy. The obverse legend is unaltered. The reverse is virtually untouched with the exception of two lines carved into the seated figure of Britannia. These lines define the figure's backside. The reverse die was sinking in the right field weakening the figure's back and the shield. Perhaps the artisan also intended to re-engrave the reverse figure but never completed the task.

The toning of the What'sIt? is a natural, choice medium brown

and the surfaces are smooth and glossy. A trough can be seen in places around the obverse effigy, primarily at the forehead. This is probably a remanent of the re-tooling process which was not removed.

¹ See TN-202 in *CNL*-137, p. 3269, for a summary of reported state coinage What'sIt?s.

